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FEBRUARY 15, 2010
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Letters

'Untitled'

TAKOMA PARK, MD.
I was surprised and thrilled to come upon "Untitled," a poem by Tchicaya u Tam'si, also known as Gerard-Felix Tchicaya [Jan. 11/18]. His poetry became part of my life my senior year at Oberlin, 1982-83, thanks to a wonderful literary translation course I took, for which I ended up translating a series of u Tam'si's poems from French into English. Having been to Zaire twice (where it turns out u Tam'si began working the year I was born), because my father worked for Unesco, I became interested in Zairois writers. Reading "Untitled" brought me back to how much I enjoyed the forceful use of emotional and visual images to evoke political and cultural ponderings, passion, reverie and more.

I was never sure I fully "understood" the poems, but it didn't, and doesn't, matter. Thank you for sharing some of u Tam'si's vibrant spirit with your readers.
CATHERINE VARCHAVER

'Cut the Theme Music'

PROSPECT, KY.
According to Eric Alterman ["Focus on Israel," Jan. 11/18], colonialism and occupation are simply problems of human friendship, to be solved when Palestinians and Israelis join hands, look into each others' eyes and say "Hey, until now I didn't know you were human." Imagine the black population living under apartheid in South Africa being instructed to just (cue the AT&T theme song) "reach out and touch someone," and the problems of colonialism and oppression magically evaporate.

Alterman assumes a referee status between right and left thinkers on the conflict, when actually he is a sweet-talker for one of the longest-running, most brutal occupations in history. Eric, cut the theme music. Let's work to end the confiscation of land, eviction of families from East Jerusalem, unequal distribution of resources and illegal imprisonment. Then we might wake to a world where human beings, allotted an equal humanity and self-determination, can share and flourish.
NAOMI WALLACE

BLOOMINGTON, ILL.
If Eric Alterman's point is that it is hypocritical to vilify Israelis, or that they are making some good films these days, I agree. However, his larger point reminded me of the way my parents used to think about the South, where they lived in the postwar years. Southern attitudes toward race struck them as surprisingly varied. My parents were friends with whites who were shocked by lynch justice and touchingly partisan for the black folk, whom they knew affectionately. How ignorant and unjust, thought my father, to condemn the white South in sweeping terms. As far as I know, none of them took part in the civil rights movement.

I was surprised that Alterman echoes the argument that Israel's critics lack a sense of "proportion." I could argue that German militaristic nationalism in 1914 was, proportionally speaking, not so bad compared with its British and French equivalents. And Serbian nationalism, the spark that set off the world conflagration, may have been even more excusable. By the same token, the wrong done to Alfred Dreyfus was surely trifling compared with an Eastern European pogrom or compared with the crimes perpetrated in Africa by the French army, in which Dreyfus was implicated. So didn't Zola and the Dreyfusards get a little carried away in their righteous zeal?

We can apparently agree that criticism of Israel can include ignorance, self-righteousness and hypocrisy. Can we also agree that Israelis deserve not only the respect accorded to white South Africans—a people with a rich history and culture, with humane authors and valiant opponents of racial injustice—but also the sanctions that helped bring down the apartheid system?
ANDREW WEEKS

letters@thenation.com

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Democracy Inc.

The *Citizens United* campaign finance decision by Chief Justice John Roberts and a Supreme Court majority of conservative judicial activists is a dramatic assault on American democracy, overturning more than a century of precedent in order to give corporations the ultimate authority over elections and governing. This decision tips the balance against active citizenship and the rule of law by making it possible for the nation's most powerful economic interests to manipulate not just individual politicians and electoral contests but political discourse itself. As such, it demands a vigorous response, uniting progressive activists and good-government reformers of every stripe along with those conservatives who are also troubled by the decision. We must now fight for legislative and constitutional remedies to this threat to the American experiment.

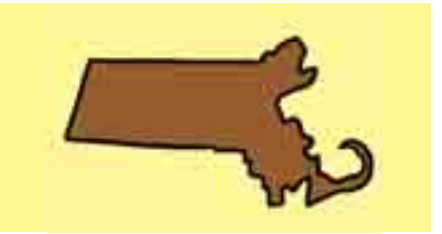
EDITORIAL

By awarding to corporations the rights of citizens when it comes to electioneering, the Court's decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* goes against the intent and understanding of founders like Chief Justice John Marshall, who referred to the corporation as an "artificial being, invisible, intangible"; and Thomas Jefferson, who warned almost two centuries ago that America must "crush in its birth the aristocracy of our moneyed corporations, which dare already to challenge our government to a trial of strength and bid defiance to the laws of our country." Dissenting Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg spoke as a strict constructionist when she declared during oral hearings on the case that "a corporation, after all, is not endowed by its creator with inalienable rights." Unfortunately, the majority dismissed Ginsburg's wise counsel and issued what Senator Russ Feingold, the Wisconsin Democrat who chairs the Constitution Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee, correctly characterized as a "lawless" decision. President Obama was right on point when he said, "I can't think of anything more devastating to the public interest. The last thing we need to do is hand more influence to the lobbyists in Washington, or more power to the special interests to tip the outcome of elections."

The High Court's rejection of the ban on direct political spending by businesses, industry associations and their surrogates, and of limits on the amount of money they may spend on campaigning, sets up a dystopia in which our elections—including this year's critical Congressional and state contests—could become little more than Super Bowl games, with corporations spending whatever it takes to sell their products, er, candidates.

Already the Chamber of Commerce is promising to unleash the "largest, most aggressive" election-season spending spree in the organization's history. Chamber officials promise to "highlight lawmakers and candidates" who toe the corporate line and "hold accountable those who don't." The savvier corporate players will not be so bold in their pronouncements—they know that the mere threat of a corporate onslaught for or against a candidate or party is enough to win legislative favor, in effect blunting the prospects for sound regulation, consumer protection and fair tax policies—let alone significant healthcare, housing, education or workplace reform.

While it is true that labor unions will also be freed to spend for their preferred contenders, it is absurd to suggest that unions—with combined assets barely equal to the combined annual compensation packages of any two of the largest investment banks—could come anywhere near the massed might of corporate capi-



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William Greider: Geithner must go

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tal. While it is true that some corporations have objected to the ruling because they think it will increase pressure on them to shell out campaign donations—a practice they rightly abhor as little more than a protection racket—most firms will consider political donations to be an acceptable price of doing business. And there is no combination of progressive forces that will be sufficient to counter bad private spending with good. "The real bad news is for people who want healthcare legislation, people who want legislation that will protect our environment, people who want…to make sure that banks are their friends, not their enemies," says Public Campaign's Nick Nyhart, who argues that for progressives reform is now "a prerequisite."

But this is about more than Democrats and progressives. The constraints on corporate campaign spending that the Court struck down were not put in place by liberal do-gooders or Democrats trying to gain election-season advantage. It was a Republican president, Teddy Roosevelt, who was so worried about the power of the trusts that he called for public financing of elections and told Congress, "All contributions by corporations to any political committee or for any political purpose should be forbidden by law." Roosevelt did not get as much reform as he wanted or as was needed, but in 1907 he did sign the Tillman Act, which banned corporate donations to federal campaigns. Corporations and their political handmaidens have maneuvered for a century, often with considerable success, to get around that law and later reforms, such as the McCain-Feingold bill of 2002, which the *Citizens United* decision partly overturned. But few imagined they would ever be given the sort of blank check the Court has now provided with its ruling that, to Senator Feingold's reading, says corporations "can just open their treasuries [and] just completely buy up all the television time, and drown out everyone else's voices."

Roberts and his allies overreached so aggressively that they have created an opening for real reform. Key members of Congress, including Senator Charles Schumer and Representative Chris Van Hollen, are moving quickly to organize hearings and craft legislative responses that address the *Citizens United* decision. Promising steps include requiring shareholder approval of corporate campaigning; forcing CEOs to take personal responsibility for ads purchased with company funds; and making sure that spending by US subsidiaries of foreign corporations is identified as such and barred just as is spending by foreign corporations and individuals.

But Democratic leaders must also recognize that such initiatives, however helpful, are mere triage. Congress must redouble efforts to pass strong reforms this year; in particular, it should enact the bipartisan Fair Elections Now Act, which bars Congressional candidates from accepting contributions larger than $100 and allows them to run honest campaigns with a blend of small donations and public funds. This legislation has attracted 127 backers in the House and six in the Senate (including majority whip Dick Durbin). The crisis created by the Court's ruling should provide the impetus for moving this bill forward—ideally with amendments or parallel legislation designed to counter the influence of corporate spending. In particular, broadcasters, which stand to reap immense profits from the new wave of corporate political advertising, should be required to provide free

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airtime to candidates. Common Cause president Bob Edgar is right when he argues that the best immediate response to a decision that "allows Wall Street to tap its vast corporate profits to drown out the voice of the public in our democracy" is to "change the way that America pays for elections [by] passing the Fair Elections Now Act."

The brazenness of the Court's decision, and its apparent goal of expanding corporate power's grip on our politics and society, demands a bolder reply. We must recognize this long-term threat. If we do, it will impel even many of the most cautious to join the historic debate over corporate personhood—a debate with roots in the *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad Company* (1886) decision, which in the words of Justice William O. Douglas "armed [corporations] with constitutional prerogatives" never imagined or intended by the founders. At the hearing on *Citizens United*, Justice Sonia Sotomayor suggested that instead of expanding the supposed First Amendment rights of corporations, the justices should reconsider the misguided *Santa Clara* ruling, which "gave birth to corporations as persons." Added Sotomayor, "There could be an argument made that that was the Court's error to start with." The current Court won't address this error of law and judgment, but Congress and the American people can.

The clearest and boldest counter to the Court's ruling is a constitutional amendment stating unequivocally that corporations are not people and do not have the right to buy elections. As Lisa Graves, a former Justice Department and Senate Judiciary Committee attorney, puts it, "We have to rebuke the Court's arrogant decision and make sure the law puts Americans before corporations." Graves, who now serves as executive director of the Center for Media and Democracy, backs an amendment stating, "No corporation shall be considered to be a person who is permitted to raise or spend money on federal, state, or local elections of any kind." Democracy activists are already organizing along the lines she suggests (go to TheNation.com for links to smart web initiatives such as movetoamend.org and freespeechforpeople.org).

Campaigns for constitutional amendments demand patience and a great deal of tenacity, since they must first secure supermajority support from both houses of Congress and then win ratification by three-quarters of the states. But as Jamin Raskin, professor of constitutional law and the First Amendment at American University's Washington College of Law, points out, "American citizens have repeatedly amended the Constitution to defend democracy when the Supreme Court acts in collusion with democracy's enemies, whether they are slavemasters, imposing poll taxes on voters or the opponents of woman suffrage." And the genius of amendment campaigns is that they provide unique opportunities to educate citizens, put elected officials on the record and advance legislative reforms—just ask the anti-abortion crusaders who over the past thirty-seven years have used an amendment strategy to take over the Republican Party and build a powerful movement that continues to strike fear in plenty of Democrats. Still, no one wants to spend decades build-

Noted.

BACKTRACKING ON BLACKWATER: A month after *The Nation*'s **Jeremy Scahill** reported on **Blackwater**'s activities in Pakistan ("The Secret US War in Pakistan," December 21), Defense Secretary **Robert Gates** confirmed that the company is operating there. In a January 21 interview on Pakistan's **Express 24/7** TV-news channel, Gates said, "They [Blackwater and another private security firm, **DynCorp**] are operating as individual companies here in Pakistan," according to an official DoD transcript. The following day, a Pakistani official acknowledged that Blackwater was operating in the country's frontier areas with the "consent and permission" of the Pakistani government, saying he had discussed the issue with officials at the US Consulate in Peshawar, who told him that Blackwater was training Pakistani forces.

When Gates's comments began to make huge news in Pakistan, US defense officials began backpedaling. As the **Wall Street Journal** reported, "Defense officials tried to clarify the comment…telling reporters that Mr. Gates had been speaking about contractor oversight more generally and that the Pentagon didn't employ [Blackwater] in Pakistan." Then, on January 23, the US Embassy in Islamabad issued a "correction," saying, "At no time did Secretary Gates say that Blackwater is operating in Pakistan." As the saying goes, never believe anything until it has been officially denied.

SIGNING OFF: Air America, the liberal radio network, announced it would file for bankruptcy two days after **Martha Coakley** lost the Massachusetts Senate race. The timing was coincidental, but both progressive setbacks were functions of a right-wing media machine that is thriving in the Obama era. The same conservative talk-radio that put tea parties in **Ted Kennedy's** backyard—Coakley lost even Kennedy's home precinct of Hyannis—has so dominated media markets in redder states that Air America's programming was never able to crack local stations. With time and cash on its side, right-wing radio had the upper hand, while Air America always struggled to make a profit.

Still, in six years Air America catapulted an impressive roster of progressives into radio, TV, new media and even Congress. **Al Franken**, the comedian turned senator, burnished his policy credentials on Air America, while **Rachel Maddow**, the most popular liberal woman on TV, launched her career as a political commentator there. The network gave platforms to **Thom Hartmann**, who now reaches 2 million people a week via syndication, and **Cenk Uygur**, who draws half a million daily YouTube viewers to his hybrid web-radio program, **The Young Turks**. Air America's demise narrows the spectrum of opinion on the radio. But it is to the network's lasting credit that so many alumni have succeeded on several platforms, joining a bumper crop of progressive talkers like **Ed Schultz**, **Bill Press** and **Stephanie Miller**, who keep the radio fair, if not balanced. ARI MELBER

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ing a movement for an "Americans Before Corporations" amendment. That's why it is especially encouraging that major organizations such as Public Citizen and People for the American Way have already committed themselves to this strategy, as have savvy legislators like Representative Donna Edwards.

Edwards plans to introduce an amendment in the House, the route that is best known. Others, including many who are skeptical about whether this Congress can or will act boldly, propose a constitutional convention, which would be called into being by state legislatures and could then generate an amendment that would go back to the states for ratification. There ought not to be conflict here, as it should be possible to build a coordinated movement in which parallel campaigns for an amendment and a convention build on one another and gain attention.

The fight for an amendment to the Constitution, however we get there, must make absolutely certain that corporations cannot simply buy our local, state and federal governments. This is too vital an issue for our democracy to allow delays, infighting or caution to rule the day.

The Nation is committed to the struggle as one that is in the noblest traditions of this magazine. We will do everything in our power to further it, with no quarter for cynicism or compromise. We will encourage the development of a transformational movement to protect free elections and free government, and will do so with the understanding that the cause is not a narrowly partisan one, or a project merely of progressives, but of all who want democracy to flourish.

This must be a movement rooted in the values of Jeffersonian democracy and the wisdom of Teddy Roosevelt, who reminded us more than a century ago that when the country was founded, "it was accepted as a matter of course that the several States were the proper authorities to regulate, so far as was then necessary, the comparatively insignificant and strictly localized corporate bodies of the day. The conditions are now wholly different and wholly different action is called for. I believe that a law can be framed which will enable the National Government to exercise control.... If, however, the judgment of the Congress is that it lacks the constitutional power to pass such an act, then a constitutional amendment should be submitted to confer the power." Roosevelt's faith in the authority of Congress to regulate corporate power has been formally and fully challenged by the lawless intervention of the Roberts Court. This is not the time to give up on legislative remedies. But it is the time to recognize that a constitutional amendment must be submitted in order to reassert the citizen power that is the underpinning of democracy.

Calvin Trillin, Deadline Poet

Vote of Confidence, Sort of

Some populists have gotten cranky
About the Fed boss, Ben Bernanke.
His policies, they say, just stank
Unless you're working for a bank.
The White House says we've Ben to thank:
We could be further in the tank.
There're some who say, "Yes, banks are skanky,
But we must stick with Ben Bernanke."

A Cold Day in Washington

On the eve of the State of the Union address, word leaked that President Obama was going to call for a multiyear freeze on "nonsecurity discretionary spending," in an apparent attempt to mollify independent voters anxious about the deficit. The reaction in the progressive blogosphere was fast and furious. "Barack Herbert Hoover Obama?" asked Brad DeLong on his blog (Grasping Reality With Opposable Thumbs), while Paul Krugman wrote a blog post titled "Obama Liquidates Himself" and others blasted the president as "lame," an "idiot," a leader with a "self-inflicted lobotomy."

COMMENT

The anger is completely justified. I'll leave aside the policy (short version: it's criminally stupid). But let me talk about the politics. I'm sure that in the short term it polls well. Most voters don't have a great grasp of what makes up the federal budget. The fact is that about two-thirds of what the government does is maintain the world's largest security apparatus and provide social insurance for the elderly, both of which are exempted from the freeze. But thanks to decades of right-wing attacks on Big Government, many people think that most of what the government spends money on are things like food stamps and foreign aid.

That's why this is so inexcusably insidious: because it uses the full power of the bully pulpit to reaffirm and endorse the kind of ignorance the right wing has spent years stoking, and in so doing further erodes what little foundation we have for social democracy. It may be a head fake; the fine print may have a lot of loopholes, in which case the policy won't be terrible, but again it reinforces the enemy's narrative that government spends too much on "programs," that military and "security" spending don't count toward the deficit and that the solution to economic misery and widespread unemployment is fiscal austerity.

As we learned from the Clinton years, there are many ways to take rhetorical positions that yield short-term tactical victories ("the era of Big Government is over") but pave the way for long-term strategic defeat. During the primary when Obama famously disparaged Bill Clinton for failing to be a transformational president, it was that failure to make a long-term case for progressive governance he seemed to have in mind. Like a panicked thief running from the cops, he's darted down the same alley, hoping for a respite from his pursuers and destined to find a dead end. I wish there was a way to sue for political malpractice, because what we're seeing from the White House and Congressional Democrats lately would make for a depressingly good case.

CHRISTOPHER HAYES

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Political Fever

When citizens shake off their resignation and rebel against the political elites, Washington reacts as if a dread new disease has risen from the swamp of public opinion. Spin doctors are on the case, prescribing various "cures" to inoculate the governing order against this virulent strain of flu. The White House senior adviser says he needs better "data" to warn Democrats against any more upsets like the Massachusetts senatorial election. The president revives popular ire as a speech theme, trying to go two ways at once. For the right, he promises a freeze on spending. For the left, he talks up jobs and his anger at Wall Street. Bankers are out. The people are in.

COMMENT

The *Washington Post* calls it a "populist brushfire," and pundits explain why our sudden rowdiness is irrational, possibly dangerous if not swiftly contained. What a rare moment to behold—we've got their attention! Events that the major media see as illness are actually the first small signs of revival in our moribund democracy. The rebellions are like early tremors in what could be a deep shift in the tectonic plates of power. If so, the first waves are going to be followed by more waves—lots of them emanating from unexpected quarters—new voices and new ideas intruding on the exclusive parlor talk that passes for political dialogue.

The wonderful thing about democracy is that once ordinary people discover they can have some influence, they almost always want more of it. We are entering a fitful era of unstable politics that could last for years. First the Republicans got hammered. Now it is the Democrats' turn. Neither party seems to understand the depths of the painful changes we are facing as a society. Neither can govern confidently, because both are unwilling to describe honestly the nation's predicament. A new order may eventually emerge, but not until the old order has lost power and is swept away.

Barack Obama, through no particular fault of his own, inherits this historic mess and must try to manage it. He has no choice but to operate within the governing system that exists, yet he must try to identify with the spreading popular discontents and deliver some concrete relief. This is a fiendish dilemma, and the president has not yet mastered it. What he has so far learned is that in these adverse circumstances, be careful what you promise.

Since the recent shock waves, Obama has made some heartening adjustments that go beyond his old plans. These are modest gestures, but big change nearly always starts with small gestures. He proposes a new tax on the largest banks and new goals for reforming the financial system: shrink the size and reach of the banking behemoths, restore the separation between traditional commercial banks and the highflying megabanks that dragged the country into catastrophe. Obama doesn't say how, but these structural changes are far more ambitious than earlier proposals. In his State of the Union address, Obama offers a few ameliorative measures such as assistance to struggling families, but his rather phony budget freeze is meant to shed his big-spender reputation. If so, he is not going to do anything serious about the enormity of joblessness and bankruptcies people are facing.

The ground, in other words, is already shifting rapidly. We can reasonably expect greater movement ahead. News stories from the White House emphasized the influence of former Federal Reserve chair Paul Volcker, who has expressed his distress over the financial debacle and the inadequate, even wrongheaded reforms proposed by Obama. Since Volcker was politely brushed aside as the president's economic adviser, this policy shift rattles a lot of cages in the administration, starting with those of Treasury Secretary Tim Geithner and White House economic guru Larry Summers. Since their work has been repudiated, it is hard to imagine how they can be trusted to design an honest implementation of what Volcker proposes.

But why give credit only to Volcker? The people in the streets also had something to do with changing the president's mind. Not just the recent election results but irregular and often unruly interventions from the right and left made the anger and disappointment visible. The center of gravity is gradually shifting away from the White House inner circle. That opens political space for the folks and much livelier debates. We will see more actions at the grassroots. Some of it may be mindless, but some of it will be asserting coherent ideas for remedying the economic disorders, demanding that politicians open their minds or risk the consequences.

Obama is vulnerable to such pressures and has so far responded hesitantly, but the more meaningful shift in power circles may occur in Congress. Democratic representatives face a queasy choice: follow their leader's agenda to possible oblivion, or break away and start legislating more aggressively on their own initiative. The Senate is a mess of inflated egos and cannot be counted on to do much of anything.

But House Democrats have a seventy-eight-seat majority and can pass a long list of popular reform measures without asking for White House permission. Bolder initiatives would be driven by fear—the ancient instinct for survival—but they could also poke timely daggers in GOP opponents. Do Republicans want to keep voting for the bankers and against genuine solutions to home foreclosures? Let's have roll calls and find out. When Republicans were in power, they used this maneuver relentlessly against Democrats, who sometimes folded and let bills pass.

House Democrats should talk about usury and put a reasonable ceiling on consumer interest rates. Prohibit any presidentially blessed commission that intends to tamper with Social Security. Compel banks to write down the principal on failing mortgages to avoid foreclosures. Create public-utility banks with limited profits and well-defined public obligations. Finance public jobs on a massive scale. If healthcare reform collapses, the House should act on the issues one by one: repeal the anti-trust exemption for health insurance companies. Open the door for importing cheaper drugs from Canada. Prohibit insurance companies from blackballing customers who are in poor health.

The problem with this strategy is that Congressional Democrats (and Obama) face an excruciating dilemma. To stand with the popular discontents, they have to bite the hand that feeds them. In 2006 and again in 2008, Dems in Congress raised gobs of campaign money—and a lot of it was from Wall Street. For many incumbent Democrats, money seems a more reliable survival strategy than people. The Supreme Court stands with the

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money guys, and its recent *Citizens United* decision tipped the game board even further in their direction.

This is where liberal-labor progressives can make a difference by exerting "tough love" on the Democratic Party. Do not be subtle about the electoral threat to comfortable incumbents. By refusing to fall into line and instead encouraging voters to talk back, activist groups can scare the bejesus out of Democrats (maybe even the president). People should demand, not beg, that Obama endorse the $154 billion jobs bill the House has already passed. Or blister Democratic senators who refuse to take up labor-law reforms needed to help workers organize. There is a long list of potential targets, if progressives are willing to assert themselves.

Usually, of course, Democrats in Washington do not take this sort of pressure seriously, and Obama's White House has been dismissive of its liberal base, especially organized labor. Politicians can count, and they typically regard threats from left of center as toothless. But activists in Washington might change that if they reach out and develop alliances with the broad ranks of ordinary people across the country, including unorganized independents and renegade Republicans. Turn away from the policy culture of Washington. Instead, learn how to listen to everyday people, their concerns and aspirations—then learn to talk like them. The right does an ugly, fear-driven version of this. The left can speak for a more honest and optimistic vision of what Americans need. Mobilizing the anger is necessary to sustaining democracy.

Many major reform measures enacted during the New Deal were accomplished only because of such disturbances. People were nose-to-nose against the government and business. Reformers did not wait for instructions from above. It was unsanctioned mobilization of people that drove Congress and Franklin Roosevelt to go further than they had intended in passing such landmarks as Social Security and labor rights for working people. In 1933 the American Bankers Association led the fight against federal insurance of bank deposits. "Unsound, unscientific, unjust and dangerous," the ABA thundered. Federal Reserve officials objected to the measure too. Even the Roosevelt administration declined to endorse it. Congress enacted it anyway, knowing how angry people were at losing everything in horrendous waves of bank failures. The bankers were wrong. The people were right.

WILLIAM GREIDER

Death and Cover-Up at Guantánamo

The day after three prisoners died at Guantánamo on June 9, 2006, the base commander announced that they had committed suicide by hanging themselves in their cells—an act of "asymmetrical warfare" against the United States. His comments grabbed headlines. When declassified documents subsequently disclosed that all three had been found not to be involved with the Taliban, Al Qaeda or any similar organization, and that two of the three had been cleared to go home by the Bush administration, it was barely reported in the US media. Then, last November, law students and faculty at Seton Hall University secured the Defense Department's investigative file and revealed that it was filled with hopeless contradictions. The official claims of how the prisoners died were physically impossible. In a January article by Nation Institute fellow Scott Horton, *Harper's Magazine* ran its own review of the deaths, leading with a bombshell: four soldiers who had been on guard that night came forward. The three prisoners had been removed from their cells and taken to "Camp No," a black site at Guantánamo presumed to be used by the CIA or the Joint Special Operations Command. The prisoners did not return alive. The magazine went on to document in detail how the Obama Justice Department, confronted with these facts, continued a shameless cover-up.

The White House seems to believe that looking into the torture and abuse—and now homicide—scandals of the Bush era would stir up a hornet's nest of GOP opposition and frustrate the administration's domestic agenda. But staying the hand of justice on the torture issue gained it nothing from the Republicans, who accuse the Obama administration of being "weak on terror" no matter what it does. However, it has badly damaged Obama's image, especially among progressives and independents, not to mention among America's allies around the world. Obama's lofty, even inspiring, words from the campaign and inauguration appear increasingly cynical and empty.

The White House mantra has been to "look forward, not back." But how do we apply this principle to news that three prisoners died as a result of foul play in a secret torture center? Are the lives of these men, unjustly imprisoned for years, really so worthless? Crimes, by definition, occur in the past. Is Obama saying that crimes—even murders—should not be prosecuted when they are politically inconvenient? That attitude puts the lie not just to Obama's Nobel Prize acceptance speech in Oslo but to his oath of office.

There is a sensible solution to this matter. The Justice Department issued the infamous torture memos and then appointed a lawyer involved in the production of at least one of them to conduct its almost comical "investigation" into the new allegations. It has demonstrated that it does not warrant the public's trust on these issues. The attorney general must therefore appoint a highly respected former prosecutor or judge as special prosecutor with full authority to investigate the matter and with security clearances that will permit full access to the people and records involved with Camp No. Leads should be followed wherever they go—even into the White House, if necessary. Charges should be pressed against all who are responsible either for the deaths or the cover-up. This is what justice and the law demand. Partisan politics cannot be allowed to stand in their way.

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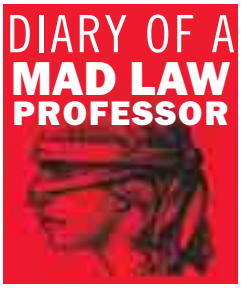
Patricia J. Williams

Corpus Ex Machina

In 1976 the Supreme Court held in *Buckley v. Valeo* that the expenditure of money is a form of speech protected by the First Amendment. The implications of that case came to an absurd and unfortunate head with the January 21, 2010, decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*. While the *Buckley* case allowed individuals unlimited spending in pursuit of political ends, *Citizens United* allows corporations that very same grace, and then some.

It is a strange moment in jurisprudence. On the one hand, corporations frequently restrict the expressions of employees or others within their purview: what they may wear, what their T-shirts may say, what political messages they may post on the walls of their cubicles. On the other, the inanimate entity of the corporation itself will now enjoy a range of First Amendment benefits not limited by principles of debate or substance, and it will be constrained only by the size of its treasury in deploying whatever technological bullhorn has the greatest chance of drowning out everyone else.



Hence, the questions on many minds are why "freedom" (as in speech) has become the functional equivalent of "expenditure" (as in money) and why on earth corporations are considered "persons" to begin with.

First, the *Buckley* decision has always been controversial, though until now it has been interpreted as allowing expenditures as a subcategory of the expressive power of living individuals only. A corporation, by contrast, is not only not human, it is property. A corporation has no natural life span, it does not vote and many are multinational. Corporations, even nonprofits, are necessarily exclusionary—their very existence premised on bottom-line calculations, competitive power grabs, branding and prospecting for self-promotion. A corporation is obliged by its bylaws to pursue its stated purpose and no other. It doesn't change its nonexistent mind or respond with compassion or feel empathy. Thus, the "corporate citizenship" that the majority in *Citizens United* touts so blithely is a very different beast from citizenship founded on a constitution of enfranchised individuals and premised on a constituency of souls united in allegiance to an ideal of community, an egalitarianism of society, the mutual shelter of a nation.

Second, a word about the history of legal "persons": for more than a hundred years, certain inanimate entities have been granted the status of fictive personhood for limited purposes. The concept grew out of the necessity for businesses to negotiate as well as to be accountable in the marketplace. When, for example, a company manufactures a defective product and sells it to you, you sue the company—not the individual executives or employees (unless there has been some act of extreme wrongdoing on their part). In other words, the company is a kind of juridical stand-in for a person, with that status rooted in the efficiency interests of contract and property law.

It takes either the most simple-minded or the most cynical state of mind to conclude from this basis that corporations are entitled to the same panoply of civil and dignitary rights as actual, fully endowed people (as in, "We, the…"). The *Citizens United* opinion begs the question: for whom is our Bill of Rights? Is a corporation really a "who" or a "whom"? If a public "person" is capacious enough to encompass a privatized "corporate" plurality, then are "We, the people" not thereby reduced by propertied fiefdoms huddled behind a facade of "free" republicanism? If, once upon a time, enfranchisement was calculated according to such diminishing metrics as "three-fifths of a person," does not this ruling confer a similar, if magnifying, mathematical disproportion upon the organizational prostheses we know as corporations?

In 1935 the great legal realist philosopher Felix S. Cohen wrote a wonderfully illuminating article called "Transcendental Nonsense," in which he debunked (at least for that generation) the notion of corporations as persons. Cohen challenged the reasoning of the Court of Appeals of New York when it asked "Where is the corporation?" in a decision about the proper venue for a suit lodged in the State of New York against the Susquehanna Coal Company, a Pennsylvania corporation. "Nobody has ever seen a corporation," Cohen pointed out. "What right have we to believe in corporations if we don't believe in angels? To be sure, some of us have seen corporate funds, corporate transactions, etc. (just as some of us have seen angelic deeds, angelic countenances, etc.). But this does not give us the right…to assume that it travels about from State to State as mortal men travel."

Cohen denounced such thinking as essentially "supernatural." He reminded jurists that a corporation does not really have a body with only one fixed head—that it may have a corps of employees in multiple states simultaneously. "When the vivid fictions and metaphors of traditional jurisprudence are thought of as reasons for decisions, rather than poetical or mnemonic devices for formulating decisions reached on other grounds, then the author, as well as the reader, of the opinion or argument, is apt to forget the social forces which mold the law and the social ideals by which the law is to be judged," he wrote.

In *Citizens United*, the Roberts Court has deployed just such a delusionary poetic device: "prosopopoeia," or a figure of speech that bestows upon an abstract entity the power of speech. Mssrs. Snap, Crackle and Pop, for example. The Geico gecko. The constructive endowment of speech unto such unendowed figurations is a common imaginative enterprise of the human mind. But the transference of such expressive power is always driven by, and must always be recognized as, a fiction in service to some very specific nonimaginary end. If there is no such grounding in practical purpose, we humanize a golem. We think Mr. Clean is addressing us in real time. We hallucinate. ■

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Eric Alterman

The Games Journalists Play

It's no exaggeration to say that John Heilemann and Mark Halperin's *Game Change* proved to be one of those brief, earthshaking events in "the village" that are *the* story until they're—almost immediately—replaced by another one. (In this case, its replacement was a genuine earthquake in Haiti and a metaphorical one in Massachusetts.) Because of the authors' unparalleled access to the 2008 presidential race's major players, and their willingness to offer blanket anonymity to those willing to spill, they succeeded in constructing a rather rare commodity: a book that sings as it singes; a story that suffers not at all from the reader's full knowledge of how it all turns out.

Phenomena such as *Game Change*'s publication are often more instructive for what they show about the community that prizes them than for the actual information they contain. Its most revealing passages, as Hendrik Hertzberg noted in *The New Yorker*, "are based on what may be fairly called gossip." It is packed with score-settling, back-stabbing, virtuoso displays of profanity by its principals and some awfully impressive feats of mind reading by its authors. As Charles Pierce pointed out in his "Slacker Friday" appearance on my "Altercation" blog, what there isn't is any discussion of, say, healthcare, Afghanistan or Al Qaeda. But surely this is an accurate reflection of the meaning of "news" to the MSM Powers That Be. While *New York*'s Heilemann is one of the more independent-minded mainstream reporters, Halperin, of *Time* and formerly of ABC, occupies a place in the forging of insider conventional wisdom not unlike that of *Vogue*'s Anna Wintour in the fashion world, with a focus no less intense on appearances and shiny surfaces.

Just before the book was published, as its spin machine was falling into place, *The Atlantic*'s Marc Ambinder offered this assessment: "Political scientists aren't going to like this book, because it portrays politics as it is actually lived by the candidates, their staff and the press, which is to say—a messy, sweaty, ugly, arduous competition between flawed human beings—a universe away from numbers and probabilities and theories."

Challenged privately, Ambinder retracted and apologized for this crack, going so far as to promise to attend the next convention of the Midwest Political Science Association as penance. Even so, he was surely giving voice to what most political journalists and practitioners believe. (*The New York Times Magazine*'s Matt Bai made a similarly sweeping anti-academic statement in a review published in the journal *Democracy* last year.)

A second unintentional revelation of *Game Change* is the actual degree to which political journalists and operatives cooperate to create campaign narratives that undermine the commonly understood notions of just what journalism is supposed to be. If there is any value in learning the dispiriting details of the dysfunctional marriage between the frightfully smarmy John Edwards and the not-so-saintly-after-all Elizabeth Edwards, it is that everything we were sold during the campaign about this couple was a lie. It doesn't really matter much in terms of whether he would have made a good president, but given how much ink is spilled on the "character" issues of candidates and their spouses, it is significant that virtually everything written about the Edwardses when it mattered belied reality. Can this really be news to everyone who covered the 2004 and 2008 campaigns?

The authors also devote considerable space to a column early in the campaign in which Hollywood mogul David Geffen made nasty comments about Bill and Hillary Clinton to Maureen Dowd before co-hosting an Obama fundraiser. Like Dowd, the *Game Change* authors go gaga over Geffen's "world-class art" ("Rauschenbergs, de Koonings, Pollocks, Gorkys, a Jasper Johns target, a Jasper Johns flag" in the book; "a Jasper Johns flag and a matched pair of de Koonings" in her column). They describe how Geffen and Dowd, "a mischievous dyad," conspired to produce a bombshell attack on the Clintons' character from their former close friend and sometime adviser. Dowd interviewed Geffen for fifteen minutes. She then "left and wrote her column, then called Geffen and read it to him." The next night, after the fundraiser, Dowd came to dinner with the Obamas and a few Hollywood types, and Geffen read the column to Barack Obama, who presumably was amused.

The Clinton campaign took the bait. Mark Penn, who comes off only slightly better in this book than did Hannibal Lecter in *The Silence of the Lambs*, reacted so hysterically that he suggested releasing whatever still-under-seal presidential records might reflect unfavorably on Geffen. Campaign spokesman Howard Wolfson demanded that Obama return Geffen's money and repudiate his support. Obama quite sensibly replied, "It's not clear to me why I should be apologizing for someone else's remarks." The incident became a boon to Obama, making the Clinton campaign look panicked and incompetent. (Hillary gave Penn and Wolfson the go-ahead to go after Geffen upon being woken up by her campaign chief, Patti Solis Doyle. If there is one worthwhile lesson to be learned from this book, it is not to make big decisions when somebody's just woken you up.)

More significant, the episode demonstrates just how little a role the rules of professional journalism play in allegedly top-flight political reporting. Real reporters do not read their columns to their subjects in advance. And Penn and Wolfson knew damn well that Obama had no control over what Geffen said or did, but almost everyone covering the story treated it as if it were a sensible demand, because the phony food-fight story line was so much fun to pursue. Finally, at the end of the story, Heilemann and Halperin inform us, in the voice of God, that "Soon after, when Geffen visited New York, people in cars on Madison Avenue beeped their horns and gave the thumbs-up as he walked down the street."

I wonder how they fact-checked that one… ■

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AMERICA'S SECRET AFGHAN PRISONS

ANAND GOPAL

Villagers and human rights officials accuse the United States military of torturing suspects in hidden detention centers.

One quiet, wintry night last year in the eastern Afghan town of Khost, a young government employee named Ismatullah simply vanished. He had last been seen in the town's bazaar with a group of friends. Family members scoured Khost's dusty streets for days. Village elders contacted Taliban commanders in the area who were wont to kidnap government workers, but they had never heard of the young man. Even the governor got involved, ordering his police to round up nettlesome criminal gangs that sometimes preyed on young bazaargoers for ransom.

But the hunt turned up nothing. Spring and summer came and went with no sign of Ismatullah. Then one day, long after the police and village elders had abandoned their search, a courier delivered a neat handwritten note on Red Cross stationery to the family. In it, Ismatullah informed them that he was in Bagram, an American prison more than 200 miles away. US forces had picked him up while he was on his way home from the bazaar, the terse letter stated, and he didn't know when he would be freed.

In the past few years Pashtun villagers in Afghanistan's rugged heartland have begun to lose faith in the American project. Many of them can point to the precise moment of this transformation, and it usually took place in the dead of night, when most of the country was fast asleep. In its attempt to stamp out the growing Taliban insurgency and Al Qaeda, the US military has been arresting suspects and sending them to one of a number of secret detention areas on military bases, often on the slightest suspicion and without the knowledge of their families. These night raids have become even more feared and hated in Afghanistan than coalition airstrikes. The raids and detentions, little known or understood outside the Pashtun villages, have been turning Afghans against the very forces many of them greeted as liberators just a few years ago.

One Dark Night in November

November 19, 2009, 3:15 AM. A loud blast woke the villagers of a leafy neighborhood outside Ghazni, a city of ancient provenance in the country's south. A team of US soldiers burst through the front gate of the home of Majidullah Qarar, the spokesman for Afghanistan's agriculture minister. Qarar was in Kabul at the time, but his relatives were home, four of them sleeping in the family's one-room guesthouse. One of them, Hamidullah, who sold carrots at the local bazaar, ran toward the door of the guesthouse. He was immediately shot but managed to crawl back inside, leaving a trail of blood behind him. Then Azim, a baker, darted toward his injured cousin. He, too, was shot and crumpled to the floor. The fallen men cried out to the two relatives—both of them children—remaining in the room. But they refused to move, glued to their beds in silent horror.

The foreign soldiers, most of them tattooed and bearded, then went on to the main compound. They threw clothes on the floor, smashed dinner plates and forced open closets. Finally they found the man they were looking for: Habib-ur-Rahman, a computer programmer and government employee. Rahman was responsible for converting Microsoft Windows

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from English to the local Pashto language so that government offices could use the software. The Afghan translator accompanying the soldiers said they were acting on a tip that Rahman was a member of Al Qaeda.

They took the barefoot Rahman and a cousin to a helicopter some distance away and transported them to a small American base in a neighboring province for interrogation. After two days, US forces released Rahman's cousin. But Rahman has not been seen or heard from since.

"We've called his phone, but it doesn't answer," said his cousin Qarar, the agriculture minister's spokesman. Using his powerful connections, Qarar enlisted local police, parliamentarians, the governor and even the agriculture minister himself in the search for his cousin, but they turned up nothing. Government officials who independently investigated the scene in the aftermath of the raid and corroborated the claims of the family also pressed for an answer as to why two of Qarar's family members were killed. American forces issued a statement saying that the dead were "enemy militants [who] demonstrated hostile intent."

Weeks after the raid, the family remains bitter. "Everyone in the area knew we were a family that worked for the government," Qarar said. "Rahman couldn't even leave the city, because if the Taliban caught him in the countryside they would have killed him."

Beyond the question of Rahman's guilt or innocence, it's how he was taken that has left such a residue of hatred among his family. "Did they have to kill my cousins? Did they have to destroy our house?" Qarar asked. "They knew where Rahman worked. Couldn't they have at least tried to come with a warrant in the daytime? We would have forced Rahman to comply."

"I used to go on TV and argue that people should support this government and the foreigners," he added. "But I was wrong. Why should anyone do so? I don't care if I get fired for saying it, but that's the truth."

The Dogs of War

Night raids are only the first step in the American detention process in Afghanistan. Suspects are usually sent to one of a series of prisons on US military bases around the country. There are officially nine such jails, called Field Detention Sites in military parlance. They are small holding areas, often just a clutch of cells divided by plywood, and are mainly used for prisoner interrogations.

In the early years of the war, these were but way stations for those en route to Bagram prison, a facility with a notorious reputation for abusive behavior. As a spotlight of international attention fell on Bagram in recent years, wardens there cleaned up their act, and the mistreatment of prisoners began to shift to the little-noticed Field Detention Sites.

Anand Gopal has reported in Afghanistan for the Christian Science Monitor *and the* Wall Street Journal. *His dispatches can be read at anandgopal.com. He is working on a book about the war in Afghanistan. The research for this story was supported by the Fund for Investigative Journalism. This article appears online at TomDispatch.com.*

Of the twenty-four former detainees interviewed for this article, seventeen claim to have been abused at or en route to these sites. Doctors, government officials and the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, an independent Afghan body mandated by the Afghan Constitution to investigate abuse allegations, corroborate twelve of these claims.

One of these former detainees is Noor Agha Sher Khan, who used to be a police officer in Gardez, a mud-caked town in the eastern part of the country. According to Sher Khan, American forces detained him in a night raid in 2003 and brought him to a Field Detention Site at a nearby US base. "They interrogated me the whole night," he recalled, "but I had nothing to tell them." Sher Khan worked for a police commander whom US forces had detained on suspicion of having ties to the insurgency. He had occasionally acted as a driver for this commander, which made him suspicious in American eyes.

The interrogators blindfolded him, taped his mouth shut and chained him to the ceiling, he alleges. Occasionally they unleashed a dog, which repeatedly bit him. At one point they removed the blindfold and forced him to kneel on a long wooden bar. "They tied my hands to a pulley [above] and pushed me back and forth as the bar rolled across my shins. I screamed and screamed." They then pushed him to the ground and forced him to swallow twelve bottles of water. "Two people held my mouth open, and they poured water down my throat until my stomach was full and I became unconscious," he said. "It was as if someone had inflated me." After he was roused, he vomited uncontrollably.

This continued for a number of days. Sometimes he was hung upside down from the ceiling, other times he was blindfolded for extended periods. Eventually he was moved to Bagram, where the torture ceased. Four months later he was quietly released, with a letter of apology from US authorities for wrongfully imprisoning him.

An investigation of Sher Khan's case by the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission and an independent doctor found that he had wounds consistent with the abusive treatment he alleges. American forces have declined to comment on the specifics of his case, but a spokesman said that some soldiers involved in detentions in this part of the country had been given unspecified "administrative punishments." He added that "all detainees are treated humanely," except for isolated cases.

The Disappeared

Some of those taken to the Field Detention Sites are deemed innocuous and never sent to Bagram. Even then, some allege abuse. Such was the case with Hajji Ehsanullah, snatched one winter night in 2008 from his home in the southern province of Zabul. He was taken to a detention site in Khost Province, some 200 miles away. He returned home thirteen days later, his skin scarred by dog bites and with memory difficulties that, according to his doctor, resulted from a blow to the head. American forces had dropped him off at a gas station in Khost after three days of interrogation. It took him ten more days to find his way home.

Others taken to these sites seem to have disappeared en-

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tirely. In the hardscrabble villages of the Pashtun south, where rumors grow more abundantly than the most bountiful crop, locals whisper tales of people who were captured and executed. Most have no evidence. But occasionally a body turns up. Such was the case at a detention site on a US military base in Helmand Province, where in 2003 a US military coroner wrote in the autopsy report of a detainee who died in US custody (later made available through the Freedom of Information Act): "Death caused by the multiple blunt force injuries to the lower torso and legs complicated by rhabdomyolysis (release of toxic byproducts into the system due to destruction of muscle). Manner of death is homicide."

In the dust-swept province of Khost one day this past December, US forces launched a night raid on the village of Motai, killing six people and capturing nine, according to nearly a dozen local government authorities and witnesses. Two days later, the bodies of two of those detained—plastic cuffs binding their hands—were found more than a mile from the largest US base in the area. A US military spokesman denies any involvement in the deaths and declines to comment on the details of the raid. Local Afghan officials and tribal elders steadfastly maintain that the two were killed while in US custody. American authorities released four other villagers in subsequent days. The fate of the three remaining captives is unknown.

'I am scared of the Americans *and* the Taliban. I'm happy my father is dead, so he doesn't have to experience this hell.' —Noor Muhammad

The matter could be cleared up if the US military were less secretive about its detention process. But secrecy has been the order of the day. The nine Field Detention Sites are enveloped in a blanket of official secrecy, but at least the Red Cross and other humanitarian organizations are aware of them. There may, however, be other sites whose existence on the scores of US and Afghan military bases that dot the country have not been disclosed. One example, according to former detainees, is a detention facility at Rish-Khor, an Afghan army base that sits atop a mountain overlooking the capital, Kabul.

One night last year US forces raided Zaiwalat, a tiny village that fits snugly into the mountains of Wardak Province, a few dozen miles west of Kabul, and netted nine locals. They brought the captives to Rish-Khor and interrogated them for three days. "They kept us in a container," recalled Rehmatullah Muhammad, one of the nine. "It was made of steel. We were handcuffed for three days continuously. We barely slept those days." The plainclothed interrogators accused Muhammad and the others of giving food and shelter to the Taliban. The suspects were then sent to Bagram and released after four months. (A number of former detainees said they were interrogated by plainclothed officials, but they did not know if these officials belonged to the military, the CIA or private contractors.)

Afghan human rights campaigners worry that US forces may be using secret detention sites like the one allegedly at Rish-Khor to carry out interrogations away from prying eyes. The US military, however, denies even having knowledge of the facility.

The Black Jail

Much less secret is the final stop for most captives: the Bagram Theater Internment Facility. These days ominously dubbed "Obama's Guantánamo," Bagram nonetheless now offers the best conditions for captives during the entire detention process.

Its modern life as a prison began in 2002, when small numbers of detainees from throughout Asia were incarcerated there on the first leg of an odyssey that would eventually bring them to the US detention facility in Guantánamo, Cuba. In later years, however, it became the main destination for those caught within Afghanistan as part of the growing war there. By 2009 the inmate population had swelled to more than 700. Housed in a windowless old Soviet hangar, the prison consists of two rows of serried, cagelike cells bathed continuously in light. Guards walk along a platform that runs across the mesh tops of the pens, an easy position from which to supervise the prisoners below.

Regular, even infamous, abuse in the style of Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison marked Bagram's early years. Abdullah Mujahid, for example, was apprehended in the village of Kar Marchi in the eastern province of Paktia in 2003. Although Mujahid was a Tajik militia commander who had led an armed uprising against the Taliban in their waning days, US forces accused him of having ties to the insurgency. "In Bagram we were handcuffed, blindfolded and had our feet chained for days," he recalled. "They didn't allow us to sleep at all for thirteen days and nights." A guard would strike his legs every time he dozed off. Daily, he could hear the screams of tortured inmates and the unmistakable sound of shackles dragging across the floor.

Then one day a team of soldiers dragged him to an aircraft but refused to tell him where he was going. Eventually he landed at another prison, where the air felt thick and wet. As he walked through the row of cages, inmates began to shout, "This is Guantánamo! You are in Guantánamo!" He would learn there that he was accused of leading the Pakistani Islamist group Lashkar-e-Taiba (which in reality was led by another person who had the same name and who died in 2006). The United States eventually released him and returned him to Afghanistan.

Former Bagram detainees allege that they were regularly beaten, subjected to blaring music twenty-four hours a day, prevented from sleeping, stripped naked and forced to assume what interrogators term "stress positions." The nadir came in late 2002, when interrogators beat two inmates to death.

According to former detainees and organizations that work with them, the US Special Forces also run a second, secret prison somewhere on Bagram Air Base that the Red Cross still does not have access to. Used primarily for interrogations, it is so feared by prisoners that they have dubbed it the "Black Jail."

One day two years ago, US forces came to get Noor Muhammad outside the town of Kajaki in the southern province of

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Tariq Ali: 'From Palestine through Iraq to Iran, Obama has acted as just another steward of the American empire, pursuing the same aims as his predecessors, with the same means but with a more emollient rhetoric. In Afghanistan, he has gone further.'

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Helmand. Muhammad, a physician, was running a clinic that served all comers, including the Taliban. The soldiers raided his clinic and his home, killing five people (including two patients) and detaining both his father and him. The next day villagers found the handcuffed body of Muhammad's father, apparently killed by a gunshot.

The soldiers took Muhammad to the Black Jail. "It was a tiny, narrow corridor, with lots of cells on both sides and a big steel gate and bright lights," he said. "We didn't know when it was night and when it was day." He was held in a windowless concrete room in solitary confinement. Soldiers regularly dragged him by his neck and refused him food and water. They accused him of providing medical care to the insurgents, to which he replied, "I am a doctor. It's my duty to provide care to every human being who comes to my clinic, whether they are Taliban or from the government."

Eventually Muhammad was released, but he has since closed his clinic and left his home village. "I am scared of the Americans *and* the Taliban," he said. "I'm happy my father is dead, so he doesn't have to experience this hell."

Afraid of the Dark

In the past two years American officials have moved to reform the main prison at Bagram, if not the Black Jail. Torture has stopped, and prison officials now boast that the typical inmate gains fifteen pounds while in custody. In the early months of this year, officials plan to open a dazzling new prison that will eventually replace Bagram, one with huge, airy cells, the latest medical equipment and rooms for vocational training. The Bagram prison itself will be handed over to the Afghans in the coming year, although the rest of the detention process will remain in US hands.

But human rights advocates say that concerns about the detention process remain. The US Supreme Court ruled in 2008 that inmates at Guantánamo cannot be stripped of their right to habeus corpus, but it stopped short of making the same argument for Bagram (officials say that since it is in the midst of a war zone, US civil rights legislation does not apply). Inmates there do not have access to a lawyer, as they do in Guantánamo. Most say they have no idea why they have been detained. They do now appear before a review panel every six months, which is intended to reassess their detention, but their ability to ask questions about their situation is limited. "I was only allowed to answer yes or no and not explain anything at my hearing," said former detainee Rehmatullah Muhammad.

Nonetheless, the improvement in Bagram's conditions begs the question: can the United States fight a cleaner war? That's what Afghan war commander Gen. Stanley McChrystal promised last summer: fewer civilian casualties, fewer of the feared house raids and a more transparent detention process.

The American troops that operate under NATO command have begun to enforce stricter rules of engagement: they may now officially hold detainees for only ninety-six hours before transferring them to the Afghan authorities or freeing them, and Afghan forces must take the lead in house searches. American soldiers, when questioned, bristle at these restrictions—and have ways of circumventing them. "Sometimes we detain people, then, when the ninety-six hours are up, we transfer them to the Afghans," said one marine who spoke on the condition of anonymity. "They rough them up a bit for us and then send them back to us for another ninety-six hours. This keeps going until we get what we want."

A simpler way of dancing around the rules is to call in the Special Operations Forces—the Navy SEALs, Green Berets and others—which are not under NATO command and thus not bound by the stricter rules of engagement. These elite troops are behind most of the night raids and detentions in the search for "high-value suspects." Military officials say in interviews that the new restrictions have not affected the number of raids and detentions at all. The actual change, however, is more subtle: the detention process has shifted almost entirely to areas and actors that can best avoid public scrutiny—small field prisons and Special Operations Forces.

The shift signals a deeper reality of war, say American soldiers: you can't fight guerrillas without invasive raids and detentions, any more than you can fight them without bullets. Seen through the eyes of a US soldier, Afghanistan is a scary place. The men are bearded and turbaned. They pray incessantly. In most of the country, women are barred from leaving the house. Many Afghans own an assault rifle. "You can't trust anyone," said Rodrigo Arias, a marine based in the northeastern province of Kunar. "I've nearly been killed in ambushes, but the villagers don't tell us anything. But they usually know something."

An officer who has worked in the Field Detention Sites says that it takes dozens of raids to turn up a useful suspect. "Sometimes you've got to bust down doors. Sometimes you've got to twist arms. You have to cast a wide net, but when you get the right person, it makes all the difference."

For Arias, it's a matter of survival. "I want to go home in one piece. If that means rounding people up, then round them up." To question this, he said, is to question whether the war itself is worth fighting. "That's not my job. The people in Washington can figure that out."

If night raids and detentions are an unavoidable part of modern counterinsurgency warfare, then so is the resentment they breed. "We were all happy when the Americans first came. We thought they would bring peace and stability," said Rehmatullah Muhammad. "But now most people in my village want them to leave." A year after Muhammad was released, his nephew was detained. Two months later, some other residents of Zaiwalat were seized. It has become a predictable pattern in Muhammad's village: Taliban forces ambush American convoys as they pass through it, and then retreat into the thick fruit orchards nearby. The Americans return at night to pick up suspects. In the past two years, sixteen people have been taken and ten killed in night raids in this single village of about 300, according to villagers. In the same period, they say, the insurgents killed one local and did not take anyone hostage.

The people of Zaiwalat now fear the night raids more than the Taliban. There are nights when Muhammad's children hear the distant thrum of a helicopter and rush into his room. He consoles them but admits he needs solace himself. "I know I should be too old for it," he said, "but this war has made me afraid of the dark." ■

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Dr. Frederick Gregory is Professor of History of Science at the University of Florida, where he has taught for 30 years. The author of the noted two-volume textbook, *Natural Science in Western History*, Professor Gregory has received the University of Florida's John Mahon Teaching Award for excellence in undergraduate teaching and the Norman Wilensky Graduate Teaching Award, as well as the 2009 Joseph H. Hazen Prize for excellence in education.

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The Case for 'Gray Power'

The waste energy from manufacturing plants can be recycled to create clean, green power.

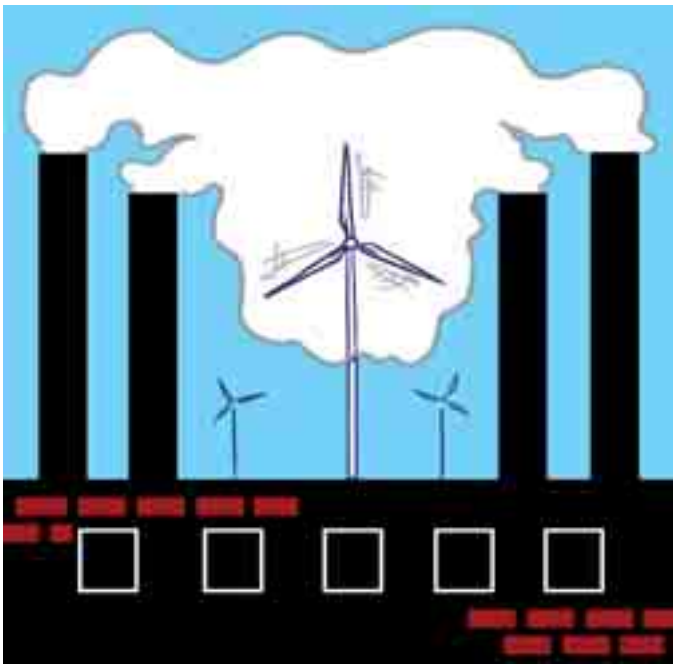
by LISA MARGONELLI

The Midwest and South have become the Colossus of Carbon: coal-dependent, with resistance to climate change legislation from the left and the right. Progressives from the region are caught in a dilemma: despite wanting to fight global warming and usher in a green economy, they know that these initiatives act against their region's economic interests. Placing a price on carbon in a state like Ohio, which gets 86 percent of its electricity from coal, hurts its citizens more than those of, say, California, which gets only 1 percent of its electricity from coal.

Then too, the region wonders how "green," as it's currently defined, will mix with its notorious rust. Every dollar of GDP created in Ohio requires the emission of 37 percent more greenhouse gases than the US average, which will make it hard to compete in a green system. Wind and solar, which make sense in the West and on the coasts, are a tough sell in the Midwest, with its relatively placid, gray skies. Even green jobs, which have made a splash elsewhere, cannot keep up with the state's hemorrhaging employment rates. When the Obama administration doled out tax credits for jobs in "advanced energy manufacturing" in early January, Ohio got seven projects—more than most other states. But these are minuscule compared with the nearly 1,200 work sites and almost 107,000 manufacturing jobs the state has lost in the past two years.

The Midwest and the South do have an abundant supply of untapped, low-cost, low-carbon power—it just hasn't been defined as green yet. The solution to some of the woes of nineteen of these states can be found right in their high-carbon infrastructures: old manufacturing plants, municipalities and agricultural produce waste energy that can be profitably "recycled" onto the grid to create power as clean as that from solar and wind but far cheaper. In fact, energy now lost as steam and gases by the region's manufacturing plants, as well as municipal and agricultural waste, could create as much energy as sixty-nine nuclear power plants, according to figures commissioned by the Environmental Protection Agency. This power could strengthen the region's electrical grid and preserve jobs by making local manufacturing plants more economically stable, while making the region a leader in greener technology. But in order to accomplish this, and steer that potential through the maze of financial and regulatory barriers that currently encourage waste, we'll need to create a federal regional stimulus program, a Clean Power Authority somewhat analogous to the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Smokestacks are the Pyramids of the Rust Belt, both product and symbol of how we built our modern economy on cheap energy. "Fly" over the state of Ohio on Google Earth and you'll find smokestacks ringing its old industrial cities and towns. They stretch high above the 1,600-degree furnaces at Toledo's Libbey Glass. Not far from downtown Cleveland, the massive ArcelorMittal steel mill injects steam and excess heat into the sky in long plumes. In Cincinnati, puffs of vapor hover above the chemical manufacturer Cognis Corporation.



JANNA BROWER

Ohio's ubiquitous smokestacks are a reminder that the state was the Silicon Valley of its time: a fountain of innovation that created the rubber tire industry, the process for making aluminum, even the world's first industrial park and led the way in aviation and oil refining. "This region gave birth to the whole twentieth century," observes Richard Stuebi, a fellow at the Cleveland Foundation, "and now it's being discarded."

Despite having a highly trained workforce, the state has a hard time attracting venture capital for new industry. Ohio rustles up only $3 in venture funding for every $1,000 of gross state product it produces, while the US average is $12. (Innovation leaders like Massachusetts and California get more than $70.)

All those smokestacks, though, hold the potential for a lower-carbon renaissance. Outfit them to use wasted steam, heat, gases or even pressure to generate power, and the three plants mentioned above could produce between 145 and 285 megawatts of additional generation—roughly as much as a coal-fired power plant—but without adding any new carbon to the air, according to analysis by Recycled Energy Development, an Illinois company. In fact, Ohio has a massive bank account of steam and energy that could be used to generate as much elec-

Lisa Margonelli, who directs the New America Foundation's energy initiative, is the author of Oil on the Brain: Petroleum's Long, Strange Trip to Your Tank.

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tricity as eight nuclear power plants, according to figures commissioned by the EPA. Ohio industry has installed so little cogeneration equipment to put its wasted energy to use that it recovers less than 1 percent of its potential. Locals joke that the state's unused reserves make it the "Saudi Arabia of cogen."

Adding this potential energy to the grid is much cheaper than building conventional power plants. According to estimates by Oak Ridge National Laboratory, recycled generation can be built for about $1,500 per kilowatt—less than half the cost of central generators that run on coal.

Even though it doesn't add new carbon to the atmosphere, recycling steam from smokestacks feels more "gray" than "green" to most people. Gray electricity would make a powerful booster for a green grid, however, because it can add large amounts of new, low-carbon power to the mix more quickly and cheaply than, say, investing in solar roofs. In East Chicago, Indiana, for example, two steel mills recycled 190 megawatts of waste energy in 2005. That same year their electrical output was roughly equal to that of all the solar photovoltaic power produced in the United States—and that was only for these two plants. According to Recycled Energy Development, recycling waste from just fifty-nine of Ohio's larger manufacturers could yield 3.3 gigawatts of generation—equivalent to more than three nuclear plants.

Getting gray power out of smokestacks and onto the grid could make high-carbon states like Ohio much better places to live and work.

Installing gray power also reduces costs for manufacturers. An article in *The Atlantic* reported that energy recycling saves $100 million a year in energy costs at one of these plants. In addition, the plants are able to continue working during summer electricity shortages and brownouts that shut down competitors. These savings enhance the company's bottom line and suggest that state policy-makers could adopt gray power as an aggressive strategy to retain local jobs. Traditionally, state officials have reduced taxes to keep employers, but that is nearly at an end: in Ohio, manufacturers spend seven times more on energy than they do on taxes. Sam Randazzo of Industrial Energy Users-Ohio points out that few Ohio companies are really "competing" against Chinese companies on the price of, say, widgets. Instead, they're competing for investment capital and operating expenses within their multinational corporate family. Local officials have to help local plants make the case that they need money to make improvements and continue to operate. Enabling plants to produce and sell gray power is one way to bolster their performance.

Gray power delivers benefits outside factory gates that could dramatically improve Ohio's economy and environment. A recent report from Policy Matters Ohio estimates that recycling 7.7 gigawatts of generation would require a $10.5 billion investment in the state. This would pay for itself within three years in energy savings of $2.9 billion a year. Crucially, it would create 40,000 green jobs. The environmental benefits would be significant: replacing coal-fired power with recycled power would reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 36 million metric tons (equivalent to taking 6.6 million cars off the road).

Getting gray power out of smokestacks and onto the grid could make Ohio—and the other high-carbon states—much better places to live and work. Ohio is not alone in its wealth of opportunities. But in order to unlock the reserves of waste energy in the other eighteen states of the Midwest and South, we'll have to overcome some significant competitive, regulatory and financial barriers.

The first problem is competitive: in Ohio and other states in the region, generating and distributing utilities have tight relationships. Rather than competing to purchase cheaper waste power, utilities see independent generators as competitors. Instead of seeing small generators as a way to increase the resilience of their grid, they feel they're subsidizing their competition. Local laws back them up: in roughly fifteen states, utilities hold a monopoly that prevents independent power producers from selling to neighboring homes and businesses directly. While some parts of the country have loosened the grip of utilities, across the Midwest and South these barriers persist, and they explain why so little of the region's potential has been exploited. Sometimes utilities don't refuse to buy power outright, but they make the process of connecting to the grid onerous or require that factory generators purchase "backup power" at prohibitively high prices. "They've got an incentive to make it as difficult as possible," said one Ohio activist. "They don't want new generators to compete with the coal facilities that the ratepayers have already paid for five times over."

A second hurdle is perverse incentives of government regulations such as the Clean Air Act, which discourages modifications at older plants that would allow the capture of lost energy. In this way, old, inefficient plants that have been grandfathered are kept in service longer simply because they do not require permitting, and modifications to make them more efficient are discouraged. In addition, a hodgepodge of taxes and policies support "passing through" energy costs on a yearly basis through tax write-offs, while energy-efficiency investments have to be written off on schedules as long as thirty-nine years, discouraging such investments.

All these barriers can be overcome with proper federal and regional policies. Many of the obstacles arise because there is a split between federal and state jurisdiction. While federal policies encourage waste recycling, many states do not. It's no accident that nearly half the recycled waste energy now on the US grid comes from just four states: Texas, Louisiana, California and New York. Texas and Louisiana are home to refiners and chemical industries with the political heft to insist that they be able to recycle their steam. New York and California have designed policies requiring utilities to buy gray power from generators. But going state by state, regulator by regulator is time-consuming, and few companies have the resources to

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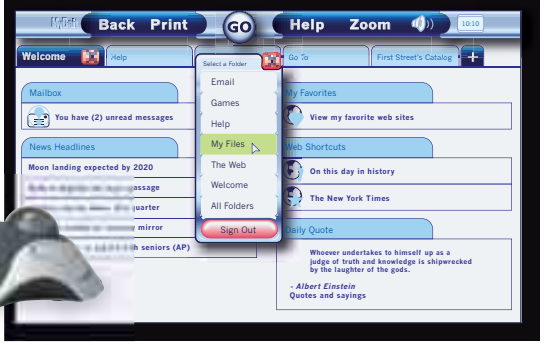

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keep challenging a system that seems to be against them.

A stubborn barrier to gray power is that despite its enormous potential, it's largely invisible in policy discussions. The Obama agenda does encourage recycling waste energy, and of the Energy Department's $32.7 billion in stimulus money, just $156 million is being spent on recycling energy, called combined heat and power. But gray power does not always qualify for the same renewable energy mandates (and by extension the warm, green feelings) that wind and solar do. If it were included in those mandates (called Renewable Portfolio Standards), utilities would have a motivation to buy the power, and regulators could raise the quantity of clean power the utilities are required to buy. And while the Obama administration has been chasing green jobs and comprehensive greenhouse-gas legislation with fervor, it has overlooked the potential of gray power to provide jobs and cheap, low-carbon electricity in coal-dependent states.

A Clean Power Authority—a federal agency tasked with recycling energy in the South and Midwest—would work like a utility, buying power generated from recycled waste energy and using it to meet federal, state and local government needs. The CPA would not generate the power but would buy it from entrepreneurs, manufacturers or municipalities at a price cheaper than what we'd pay for newly built coal-fired power. In the best possible world, the simple presence of government as lead purchaser would encourage utilities to buy the power themselves and build a competitive market for such electricity.

A new federal agency focused on helping states standardize regulations, make environmental permitting processes speedier and write more sensible tax laws and policies could overcome some of the barriers that have kept recycled energy off the grid. The CPA could also operate as a sort of laboratory for finding the best mix of technology, regulation and incentives to bring many megawatts of new power online. Finally, just as the federal government offers loan guarantees for builders of nuclear power plants, the CPA could offer loan guarantees or zero-interest loans to companies that install gray generation equipment, shepherding a new industry through the early years of reaching scale in the marketplace.

While the CPA seems like a radical idea, it has antecedents in New Deal initiatives like the Tennessee Valley Authority, which addressed the triple needs for cheap power, economic development and environmental preservation through electrification of the Tennessee Valley in the 1930s. Today the CPA could address the particular needs of the South and Midwest in the transition to a lower-carbon economy with more secure energy supplies. The TVA's great success was in using federal muscle to hasten what would have been a slow process of bringing power to the region via conventional generators and markets. Similarly, the coal-heavy states have been unable to get the venture capital or the alternative energy programs to break out of their high-carbon economies, and it seems unlikely that a cap-and-trade program will ease that transition. Using the CPA to target resources and capital at the region's infrastructure will allow the South and Midwest to become leaders in clean power, remaking the political geography of carbon and building a new constituency for green initiatives in the process. ■

Understanding Massachusetts

The Bay State election results are a chapter in a story that predates Obama's presidency.

by JONATHAN SCHELL

Is the world as we know it coming to an end because Scott Brown, a Republican, won the special election in Massachusetts for the Senate seat of Edward Kennedy? You can actually make the argument. To wit: Brown campaigned as the "forty-first vote," meaning that with his arrival in the Senate, the Republicans would acquire just enough seats to defeat cloture of filibusters, by which, under Senate rules, they can kill any piece of legislation. The legislation on most people's minds these days is the healthcare bill, which Brown has specifically vowed to reject. But the threat, as everyone knows, extends beyond that bill to any bill that the Republicans choose to defeat. If the Republican Party were a diverse or open-minded one, the threat would be only theoretical, but in fact it has voted in lockstep against most major bills proposed by the majority, including the stimulus package earlier last year. Thus, Brown's self-designation as the forty-first GOP vote carries within it a threat to hamstring legislation across the board. And since the world needs American cooperation to cope with the expanding array of dangers it faces, a hamstrung United States means a hamstrung world. The most consequential business before the world is probably halting climate change, but for this to happen the United States must participate. The election of Brown, who opposes cap and trade, could kill that hope, and with it the hope of a serious global agreement to curtail greenhouse gas emissions. All of which is how his election could end the world as we know it.

JANNA BROWER

Jonathan Schell, the Doris Shaffer Fellow at The Nation Institute, teaches a course at Yale on the nuclear dilemma. He is the author of The Seventh Decade: The New Shape of Nuclear Danger.

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Of course, that chain of consequences could be broken at many points. For instance, some Republicans may break ranks on the climate change bill, or the rest of the world may proceed without the United States, as the European Union is doing. On the other hand, the Republican paralysis of Congress is likely to stall a long agenda of other urgent business, and it is sobering that in this and in so many other matters, American politics appears to have drifted so far from facing the real business of the country and the world. (The words "global warming" did not appear on Brown's campaign website.)

How has it happened? How have politicians and voters apparently detached themselves so thoroughly from the actualities of the times we live in? It's not so easy to determine. The Brown voters were rebelling against something, but what was it? It's evident they were not thinking of climate change. Were they rejecting Obama? The healthcare bill in the Senate? Too much "change"? Not enough change? The wrong change? They were allegedly angry, but at what? Was it big government? Big business? Both? President Obama intriguingly but rather mysteriously said their anger was the same anger that propelled him into office a year ago. But how could that be? The polls didn't do much to clarify the situation. A *Washington Post*/Harvard/Kaiser Family Foundation poll right after the election found that by 63 percent to 31 percent, the voters of Massachusetts thought the country was "seriously off on the wrong track." Brown won two-thirds of these voters—whereas Obama won more than 80 percent of them in the fall of 2008. And what was the "right track"? The numbers were murky. On whether the government should do more to solve problems, the voters were split, with 50 percent thinking it should and 47 percent thinking otherwise. The public professed discontent with the Democrats' plans for healthcare, but only by 48 percent to 43 percent. Massachusetts has a healthcare plan not unlike Obama's, which the public approves by 68 percent. And Obama himself had the support of 61 percent of the state's voters. And Republicans in Congress were rejected by 58 percent and approved of by only 40 percent.

Such responses seemed to convey more ambivalence than anger. A Brown voter in Massachusetts, cited by the Kennedy School's Richard Parker in a piece by Jim Sleeper at TPMCafé, caught these paradoxes perfectly when he commented that he was "for individual liberty" and wanted "to get government's hands off Social Security and Medicare." Moreover, many voters expressed disappointment not in Obama and Democrats generally but in Brown's opponent, Martha Coakley, who failed to campaign vigorously after winning the Democratic primary.

Still, whatever the polls say, the results won't go away, and *something* has clearly changed in public opinion since a year ago. We need to remember that the Massachusetts results are a chapter in a story that predates Obama. From the beginning of his presidency, Obama has confronted a dilemma that has perhaps been unique. On the one hand, he has been handed a tangle of crises that in their gravity and complexity rival those faced by any previous president, including the collapsed economy, a dysfunctional, overexpensive health system, two stalled wars and, of course, climate change. On the other hand, perhaps precisely because the real agenda was so daunting, he faced a politics steeped in unreality—a body politic that was impatient for the return of a prosperity that had been based on speculation and fraud, was unprepared for the sacrifice that healthcare reform would impose on some, was still unready to let go of victory in the stalled wars and apparently was quite oblivious of climate change. (So distant was that concern from electoral politics in Massachusetts that the *Washington Post* poll didn't even ask voters about it, nor does it usually register on pollsters' lists of their concerns.)

These illusions were supported by the organized advocacy, amounting to a kind of political platform, of the Republican Party, which has raised denial to an art form and has put forward no realistic proposals for dealing with the economic or ecological crises. A fateful question for Obama from the beginning of his presidency has always been how much he would accommodate himself to current fantasies and how much he should insist on dealing with the real. With his ingrained bent for conciliation, which is one of the great themes of his political career (and of his literary production before that), he chose a middle course, seeking to woo the opposition. Unfortunately, that also involved muting his voice to compromise with its illusions as well. He rejected one war but embraced the other. He supported Bush's bailout of the banks and refused to take control of them. He kept Bush's defense secretary (making Gates one of only a few Republicans ready to work with Obama). He declared an end to torture but refused to insist on accountability for the torture that had taken place. He sought a reconciliation with the opposition in Washington that in a way left out the rest of the country. Yet the courtship of the opposition failed. His reward was a Republican media and tea party movement that smeared him as foreign-born and a Hitler, or Stalin, redux. The Congressional Republicans spurned his initiatives, voting in lockstep to block his proposals while hankering for the legislation-killing forty-first vote they now have.

In the face of this campaign, the path of fantasy, so resolutely taken by the Republicans, was never a possible path for Obama. The only hope, then, was a politics of the real, of actual accomplishment. He had to do the simplest but hardest thing in politics: recognize problems, persuade the public of their reality, solve them and show the results. Understanding this, the Republicans had a ready answer all year: obstruct him (and the country) from achieving anything. Refuse to cooperate with him, and then accuse him of partisanship. Stop all his initiatives and then brand him as ineffective. Prevent improvement in people's lives, and then point out that their lives are still unimproved.

That is what has happened in the past year, and it is the strategy that, whatever the polls say, was ratified in Massachusetts, which de facto voted for obstruction.

What is Obama now to do? Ally himself more passionately, more eloquently with the real. Give voice even to unpopular truths. Tepid distortions can never compete successfully with brazen ones. Only full-throated pursuit of truth can rival big lies.

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We know he has eloquence and passion in him. Instead of trying for hopeless compromises with the powerful, he should recognize the two quagmires and act accordingly; make the case for stopping global warming (his speech at the recent Copenhagen summit was perfunctory and flat); acknowledge the abyss that has opened between an exploitative class of the wealthy and the rest of the country and do something significant to close it. There is a power in the real that is going untapped. It is the power of that salubrious, galvanizing, irreversible inner shock that you feel when the veil falls from your eyes and the truth of something is placed before you. As Obama must know from his years of community organizing, moments like this, occurring in millions of hearts and minds, are indispensable for a living politics, which otherwise stagnates. The alternative is more of the unfocused resentment, directionless anger, obstructionism, confusion and disappointment displayed in the Massachusetts election. ■

Letters

(continued from page 2)

COLUMBIA, MO.

Eric Alterman takes exception to Roane Carey's remark that "if the [Palestinian Authority] collapses…it will strip off the mask that there is anything in the territories beyond Israeli occupation." In Alterman's view, Carey is oblivious to the comforting state of contentment among the occupied territories' Palestinian citizens. According to a recent survey, 63 percent of those citizens believe their safety is "secured" or "completely secured."

This must be a contingent sort of security, though, in light of the fact that 77 percent of those respondents were "worried" or "very worried" that they or a member of their family could be hurt by Israel in their daily life or that their land would be confiscated or home demolished. To help us find the fair and balanced tipping point along the "one-dimensional picture presented by both left and right," Alterman prescribes some Israeli movies, of which I've seen two. *Waltz With Bashir* is indeed a good flick, but it's entirely about Jewish angst; not exactly on point. *The Lemon Tree* is on point, however. It's a moving dramatization of precisely what Carey is claiming: that occupation is at the core of existence in the territories, and that the phony "peace process" the PA has so disastrously bought into has no hope of reversing the relentless trajectory of oppression, dispossession and state violence. Ehud Olmert, co-architect of the Gaza atrocity, articulated the "leftist bugbear" Carey quotes and Alterman tries to hide: that Israel will soon "face a South Africa–style struggle for equal voting rights. As soon as that happens, the state of Israel is finished." Come on, Eric! In all other contexts you hate "fair and balanced." Why is this context different from all other contexts?

GEORGE P. SMITH

Alterman Replies

NEW YORK CITY

I've been writing for *The Nation* for twenty-seven years now. I just turned 50, so with luck, I have another twenty-seven or so years in me. During that time I hope, just once, to read someone other than myself in this magazine observe that the Israelis do not bear responsibility for absolutely every misfortune that has befallen the Palestinian people. And that in fact, the Palestinian leadership, and those who call themselves "militants"—but the rest of the world calls "terrorists"—bear significant responsibility as well. I guess today is not that day…

ERIC ALTERMAN

Watson: Waste Not, Want Not

DETROIT

What good news to read John Nichols's selection of Detroit Councilwoman JoAnn Watson as Most Valuable Local Official for 2009 [Jan. 11/18]. Watson has been a leader with Zero Waste Detroit to stop the city from using the nation's largest municipal waste incinerator. Her strong and persistent voice has been critical to our work. With her leadership and the hard work of community members and groups, Detroit is moving toward a system that focuses on materials recovery and new green jobs. Watson was with us every step of the way.

MARGARET WEBER, *Zero Waste Detroit*

Our Worthy Opponents

STOCKTON, CALIF.

We've all seen it: the beet-red-faced kid in the grocery store, stomping, stiff-legged, screaming because some demand was not met. This, my friends, is the modern face of the Republican Party; rude, regressive and ranting. They're joined at the hip with Blue Dog, wart hog, lost-in-a-fog Democrats and a smattering of insipid, insolent, ill-mannered independents, all fuming since the election of Barack Obama.

Call it the pout after the rout, an adult version of everything you hate about someone else's kid. And the parents of this soiled, spoiled, well-oiled, naughty brood? They're politicians like John McCain and Chuck Grassley, or the Neanderthals yelling "Fire!" in a crowded theater, like Glenn Beck and Rush Limbaugh, who make political hay, or money, or both, at our country's peril.

This has nothing to do with healthcare reform (I *like* paying eighteen bucks for an aspirin! The insurance industry will suffer if it has competition! Keep your damn government hands off my Medicare!) and everything to do with their notion that a black man should not be giving orders.

DAVE WALDON

Adieu, Swank Filer—IV

HADLEY, MASS.

I was sorry to read in "Noted" [Jan.4] about the retirement of a longtime *Nation* contributor, and I'd like to thank him for bringing my wife and me many hours of delighted frustration. He is honest to a point, but his wiles are twisted. (For those who are not cryptic-crossword solvers, the previous sentence is a clue, the answer to which is, of course, Frank W. Lewis.) I hope you can find a worthy successor!

BRIAN W. OGILVIE

We are in the process of doing just that. To take a crack at assuming Frank's mantle, send sample puzzles to letters@thenation.com with "Crosswords" in the subject line. —Ed.

Corrections

In John Nichols and Robert W. McChesney's "How to Save Journalism" [Jan. 25], the *Christian Science Monitor* was lumped in with newspapers that had ceased print editions to appear solely online. The venerable *CSM* has merely cut its print production from daily to weekly.

Also, in Christopher Hayes's "The Great Leap" [Jan. 11/18], Yichang (not Yinchuan) is the name of the city near the Three Gorges dam in China.

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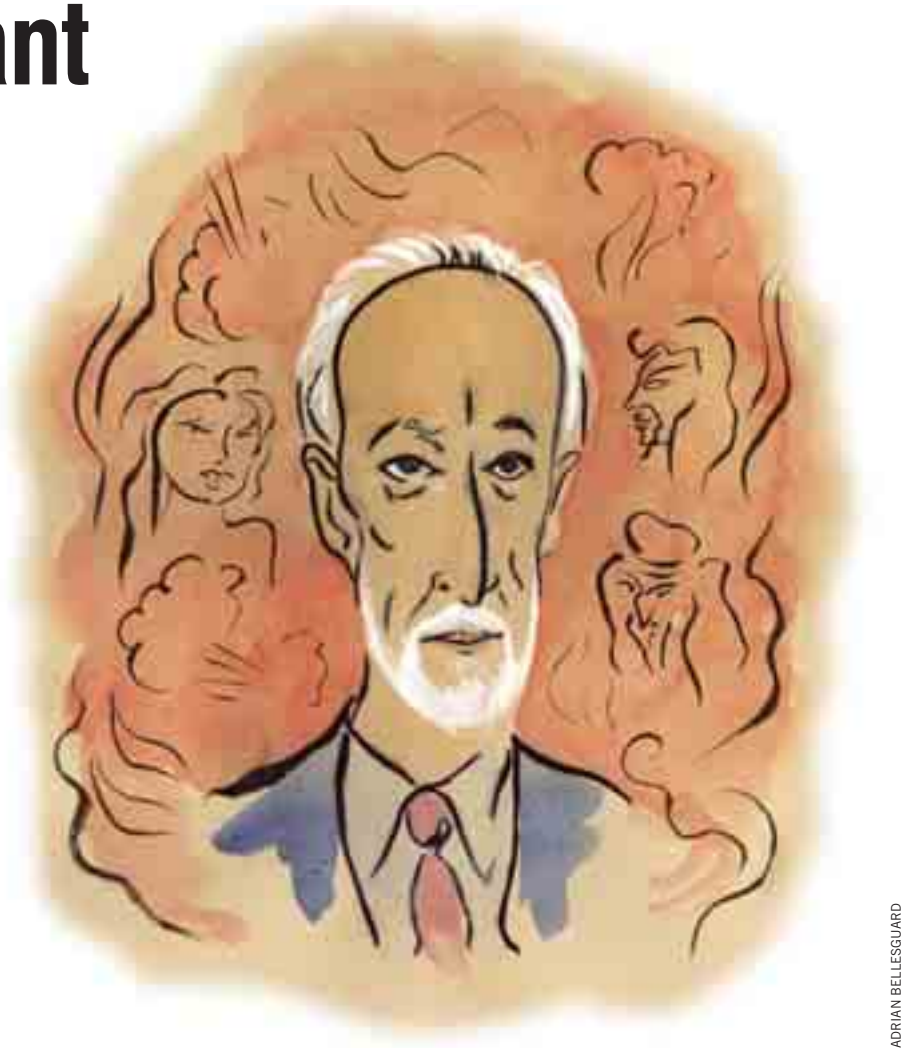
Books & the Arts.

Telling It Slant

by JOANNA SCOTT



ADRIAN BELLESGUARD

In his memoir *Boyhood: Scenes from Provincial Life*, published in the United States in 1997, John Coetzee is a young boy living on a housing estate outside the town of Worcester in South Africa. To his impressionable mind the world is a cruel place where those in authority take sadistic pleasure in the beatings they dole out. He watches a teacher fly into a rage and whip a student who can't keep up with his schoolwork. He watches a white man thrash a colored boy who has tried to run away from his chores. John is appalled by the brutality around him. Coming of age in provincial South Africa in the 1950s, he decides that childhood is "a time of gritting the teeth and enduring." He grows ever more inward and solitary. His earliest memory is of watching his mother release a scrap of paper out the window of a bus. For years he thinks of the scrap of paper, "alone in all that vastness." He dreams of the day when he will find the paper and rescue it.

In *Youth*, published in 2002, John Coetzee is a young man working as a programmer at IBM in London. Though he has focused his university studies on mathematics, his real love is literature. He discovers Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot and learns from them that "he must be prepared to endure all that life has stored up for him, even if that means exile, obscure labour, and obloquy." He follows Pound's recommendations for reading. The more he reads, the more confident he is in his tastes. He prefers Chaucer, who "keeps a nice ironic distance from his authorities," to Shakespeare, who gets "into a froth about things." He is suspicious of the "easy sentiment" in the Romantics and Victorians, and he considers Joyce "too bound up with Ireland and Irish affairs." He reads all of Ford Madox Ford—a writer known for mixing fiction and autobiography—because Pound "promoted Ford as the sole heir in England of Henry James and Flaubert."

He carries a book of poetry to read on the train, in hopes that an "exceptional girl will appreciate what he is reading and recognize in him an exceptional spirit too." He fantasizes about going to bed with Emma Bovary. Women, John believes, will be his inspiration. "In a perfect world he would sleep only with perfect women, women of perfect femininity yet with a certain darkness at their core that will respond to his own darker self." It turns out to be easy enough for him to find women to sleep with, but "the perfect woman" eludes him. He grows more isolated and at the same time more idealistic about the importance of literary expression. He longs to write poetry and looks for the right mistress who, "by means of an instinctive faculty," will perceive the "sacred fire" burning in him. He's hopeful that sex, along with those other two worthy subjects for a poet—madness and suffering—will give him something to write about.

It's convenient for this aspiring writer that women, at least as he understands them, do not have what it takes to be legitimate artists. And because women "do not have the sacred fire" of artistic creativity (he names Sappho and Emily Brontë as exceptions), they seek it in male artists and "give themselves to them." During this period, when John Coetzee is in his larval stage as a writer, he develops a rather elaborate mystical system around this notion: "In their lovemaking artists and their mistresses experience briefly, tantalizingly, the life of gods. From such lovemaking the artist returns to his work enriched and strengthened, the woman to her life transfigured." But at least within the pages of *Youth*, John is never treated to this divine inspiration. He ends on a note of despair, admitting that he is afraid of women, writing and failure.

Summertime
J.M. Coetzee
Viking. 266 pp. $25.95.

Joanna Scott is a fiction writer. Among her many books are Arrogance, The Manikin *and, most recently,* Follow Me.

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By the time we meet up with John Coetzee in *Summertime*, he is dead (the main character is survived by the author, the real J.M. Coetzee). But John has lived long enough to distinguish himself as a writer and earn a place for himself as "public property." *Summertime*, which is described on the cover as "fiction," is cast within its pages as "a seriously intended biography" that concentrates, the biographer explains, "on the years from Coetzee's return to South Africa in 1971/72 until his first public recognition in 1977…an important period of his life, important yet neglected, a period when he was still finding his feet as a writer."

The novel opens and closes with short fragments from John Coetzee's notebooks, but the bulk of the narrative is organized around a set of interviews conducted by the biographer, Mr. Vincent, with five people who knew John during the years when he was back in South Africa after doing graduate work in the United States. Unconvinced by conventional methods of literary biography, Mr. Vincent prefers to construct a portrait made up of a range of perspectives. Among the four women he speaks with, two are John's former lovers, one is a woman who was repulsed by his advances and one is his cousin. The only man Mr. Vincent interviews is John's former colleague at the University of Cape Town.

In this "important yet neglected" period of John Coetzee's life, he is single and living with his widowed father in a mud-brick house with walls "so rotten with damp creeping up from the earth that they have begun to crumble." Hoping to insulate the foundation against further dampness, he decides to put a belt of concrete around the periphery. He orders the sand, the stone and the cement, and sets out to follow a plan in a home improvement guide. He works without assistance—a gesture that signals his refusal to participate in apartheid's degrading economic system.

It's an emblematic effort not just because it reveals how even the most basic action can bear political weight but also because it involves a new confrontation with failure. At least when it comes to mixing concrete, John Coetzee is inept. He confuses cubic meters with square meters; a job that he expected would take a few days threatens to last for many weeks. But instead of giving up, he persists with the effort.

The young man who is afraid of failure at the end of *Youth* seems to be a little less afraid in *Summertime*. He's more tenacious, more willing to risk humiliation in order to finish what he's started. While he blames himself for his "feeble" response to the moral dilemma posed by the ruling regime of South Africa, he finds a new satisfaction in independent labor. It's revealing that once he realizes he has made a mistake in measuring the materials for the concrete, he applies himself to the task with renewed energy. He tells himself that the "slabs he is laying will outlast his tenancy of the house, may even outlast his spell on earth." He sounds a similar note later, when, in a conversation with a woman named Julia Frankl, one of his former lovers, he describes a book as "a gesture of refusal in the face of time. A bid for immortality." In his determination to produce something lasting, John is much more willing to face up to a mistake and get on with his work.

Compiled by Mr. Vincent, the excerpts from the notebooks and the five interviews offer a fractured portrait of an "unemployed intellectual" who is ambivalent about his emotional isolation. John is keen on defending himself against the incursions of society and writes in his notebook, "if you want to succeed in the world and have a happy family and a nice home and a BMW you should not try to understand things." On the other hand, he feels a responsibility to the world. Viewing himself as an outsider, he is looking for ways to defy taboos.

While there's no description of him at his desk, we learn that he publishes his first work of fiction, *Dusklands*, following his return to South Africa. He is growing up, becoming the man who will one day be described by his biographer as "a great writer." Yet he still has more growing to do. One of his lovers from this period reports that there was "an air of failure" about him. He remains undistinguished as a lover ("he could perform the male part perfectly adequately," Julia says). And he still thinks women are all the same, or at least he gives the different women in his life this impression.

In the first interview, Julia Frankl recounts the details of her affair with John in South Africa in the early '70s. Isolated in her own marriage, she spots John shopping in a supermarket. "He was scrawny," she tells Mr. Vincent. "He looked out of place, like a bird, one of those flightless birds; or like an abstracted scientist who had wandered by mistake out of his laboratory." She launches the affair not because she's attracted to him (she says he "was not easy to take to, his whole stance toward the world was too wary, too defensive") but because she is stuck in a bad marriage and needs to prove her seductive powers. In her most unsettling judgment of John, she describes *Dusklands* as "self-administered therapy." With a little prompting from Mr. Vincent, she expands: "He had decided he was going to block cruel and violent impulses in every arena of his life—including his love life, I might say—and channel them into his writing."

The second woman Mr. Vincent interviews is John's cousin, Margot. Her interview is recast into narrative form by Mr. Vincent, with Margot referred to in the third person. (He defends his method by insisting that "changing the form should have no effect on the content.") Margot is more forgiving of her cousin than Julia was, describing him as "an odd character." Of everyone interviewed by Mr. Vincent, she's the one who gives voice to the ambition that John is too modest or skeptical to express. She says to him, "You could change your fate tomorrow if you would just put your mind to it." Most important, she articulates a clear moral position in the face of apartheid. Reflecting on the racial designations used to legislate the interactions of South Africans, she prays, "Let the time come soon, O Lord… when all this apartheid nonsense will be buried and forgotten."

One of the stories Coetzee tells in this book is about responses to apartheid and the evolution of strategies of opposition. John has moved from the position of silent witness in *Boyhood* to the struggle to communicate his "rage and despair" in *Summertime*. It's a story that has clear moral demarcations and yet, when explored through a series of lived experiences, is full of entrapping ambiguities. Margot can do no better than to describe apartheid as "nonsense." In his early years after his return to South Africa, John can do no better than to shore up the periphery of his crumbling home on his own. Profound injustice is as difficult for them to understand as it is to overcome. As the exhausted Magistrate says toward the end of Coetzee's novel *Waiting for the Barbarians*, "I have lived through an eventful year, yet understand no more of it than a babe in arms."

Through the "summer" of his life, John Coetzee is learning to risk failure in order to write books that will outlast "the nonsense" of his time. He is also learning to risk failure in his relationships with women. This story is prominently developed in the third interview in the novel—an interview with Adriana, a Brazilian dance teacher whom John pursues with the same doggedness with which he mixes and pours the concrete around his house.

When Adriana and John meet, John is working as a tutor at a Catholic girls' school in Cape Town. Adriana's daughter is one of his students. Without much prompting from

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Mr. Vincent, Adriana launches into an account of John's obsession with her. In a haze of infatuation, he pursues her during the months when her husband is dying. After she refuses to meet John alone, he sends her a series of letters, some of which she doesn't even read. She goes so far as to tell him she detests him. "He forced me to detest him," she explains to Mr. Vincent. "He was a little man, an unimportant little man," she declares. "Was he really a great writer?" she asks. But she can't answer that question because she has never bothered to read his books.

As harsh as this assessment is, it's consistent with sentiments expressed by the other women in the book. To Julia Frankl, John is an adequate lover who is using his writing as "self-administered therapy." Margot, who knows John best, finds him odd. Sophie, a French professor at the University of Cape Town and the last woman Mr. Vincent interviews, describes John as a tortoise who would withdraw into his shell when he sensed danger. Regarding his work, she says that it "lacks ambition": "The control of the elements is too tight. Nowhere do you get a feeling of a writer deforming his medium in order to say what has never been said before, which is to me the mark of great writing." But she, like the others, hasn't read all his books. She claims to have lost interest.

There's a troubling uniformity to the responses of these women that is expressed not just through their criticism of John's character but through their dismissive attitude toward his whole career. While the communication of their contempt might seem like brave, unsparing self-assessment on the author's part, their judgments are based, at best, on partial knowledge. They reveal that they haven't read all his work, or haven't read it carefully. Two of them, Sophie and Julia, express surprise or resentment that they hadn't appeared as characters in his books.

By the time the interviews are being conducted, John has written all the books he's going to write, among them *Boyhood* and *Youth*. He also has left behind notes for a third memoir. Within his incomplete autobiographical work, then, he presumably stands by his early theory of woman-as-muse who ignites "the sacred fire" in the male artist.

Given Coetzee's generally cautious prose, this flimsy metaphor stands out as deliberately garish. But for the fictional writer who is trying to turn his artistic yearning into great literature, it remains a convenient paradigm, and it's reinforced in *Summertime* by the structure of the narrative. From one interview to the next, the women are at the mercy of the biographer, who both asks the questions and chooses how to arrange the answers. These women may earn our sympathy with their accounts of their personal struggles, but their access to the creative process is limited, at best. Only the one man interviewed, Martin, hints at real engagement with John's literary work. While using the same qualifiers to describe John's teaching that Julia uses to describe his performance in bed (Martin calls John a "perfectly adequate academic"), he worries that the form Mr. Vincent has devised for his biography may privilege John's personal life "at the expense of the man's actual achievements as a writer." In a sense he's right; the form does privilege the personal life. It's only appropriate, then, that four of the five people interviewed aren't much interested in the writer's "actual achievements."

While there's obvious overlap, the circumstances of the novel do not correspond completely with the biographical facts of J.M. Coetzee's life. During the same years being investigated by Mr. Vincent, the author was already married and had two children. The history of John's love affairs and unrequited obsessions might share some aspects with the actual life, or it might be a complete invention. At any rate, the disclosures can't be the point, since most readers won't be able to keep track of the differences between the lived life and the made-up one. The uncertainties and discrepancies only underscore the premise of the book: John Coetzee is an invention.

Summertime is presented as an imaginary portrait written by Mr. Vincent, an impresario in his own right who takes liberties with the facts. Yet since the fictional John Coetzee is cast as the author of the books that the real Coetzee has written, it follows that his role in *Summertime* is more complex than it initially appears. Perhaps John isn't just the evasive subject being explored; he might well be the implied author who has concocted the ruse of this "biography" in order to observe this period of his life from a remove.

This accomplished writer is reluctant to reflect on the genesis of his work. Yet over the course of the memoirs, he has been reflecting on the genesis of his work. He has been explaining how he came to be a writer. Rather, he has been writing about the impossibility of explaining how he came to be a writer. As Martin observes, John is reluctant "to probe the sources of his inspiration, as if being too self-aware might cripple him." Thanks to the indifference of the women Mr. Vincent interviews, he doesn't have to probe too deeply.

With all the paraphrases and interruptions and hasty judgments that fill the interviews of *Summertime*, Coetzee seems to be leading his readers farther from the subject he purportedly set out to explore. Mr. Vincent is supposed to be investigating an important yet neglected period in the life of a major writer. But what do we end up learning about this writer? We learn that he is viewed with indifference, contempt and puzzlement by the same women he'd hoped would inspire him. He can't tell when they've had enough of him. They can't recognize his genius.

Yet to the extent that *Summertime* is self-portraiture, it is permeated with John's sensibility. Whether or not he is the implied author of Mr. Vincent's biography, he shares the real author's name. Even if the book isn't strictly autobiographical, it is by an author named J.M. Coetzee and at least pretends to be about him. And this connection raises the specter of motive: why would a writer choose to represent himself in this fashion, through the unflattering comments of shortsighted women?

By drawing attention to the choices the author has made, the novel ends up moving closer to the subject that the character would rather avoid: his evolution as a writer. He continues to cling to a restrictive notion formulated in his youth; at the same time, he is ready to expose the consequences of this position. While this "biography" is presented as a fiction, the implications are harsh. Since John can think of using women only for his writing, he fails repeatedly to develop any satisfying intimacy with them.

I'm reminded of a question posed in another novel that explores a writer's sources. In Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire*, the narrator, who supposedly is explaining how a poet comes to write his greatest poem, is asked, "How can you know that all this intimate stuff about your rather appalling king is true?" The narrator's grand answer is, "the stuff *will* be true" once it's transmuted into poetry. It may be an absurd claim, but as we read on, we find that it isn't entirely mistaken. As with all artfully elaborate lies, the narrator's hoax takes on a reality of its own, one that we can read as self-expression even though it remains defiantly false.

In *Summertime*, Coetzee follows his fictional self through the early years of adulthood. This character, we know, goes on to write more books—books that through ingeniously slanted approaches delve deeper into the workings of a writer's mind than we ever could have hoped to go. One of this writer's later inventions, Elizabeth Costello, may even disprove the claim that women lack

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what it takes to produce great art; or perhaps, like Sappho and Brontë, she's one of the exceptions. But if Coetzee's new novel reinforces a reductive formula for the creative process, it is his revealing way of examining the effects of problematic motivations. And it looks forward to the provocative books that Coetzee will go on to write. He's only just begun to get at the heart of his work. It's only summer, after all. ■

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Ramon Fernandez, 1932

Ghostly Demarcations

by ALICE KAPLAN

The latest arrival on the ever expanding shelf of volumes assessing literary reputations during the years of the Nazi occupation of France is a long book with a short title. *Ramon* is a son's biography of his father, a collaborator, and it's hard to imagine a more tangled, unresolved contradiction of a literary career than his. Translated by T.S. Eliot in *The Criterion*, apostrophized by Wallace Stevens in one of his best-known poems, Ramon Fernandez was an esteemed literary critic who became, from 1936 to 1943, the self-appointed "minister of culture" for a fascist populist movement led by Jacques Doriot, the former communist mayor of Saint Denis. For Fernandez's son, Dominique, now 80, the untangling of those contradictions has been a life's work.

Ramon
By Dominique Fernandez.
Grasset. 816 pp. 24.90 euros.

Ramon is part of a subgenre of literature by children of collaborators currently in full flower in both memoir and fiction. Among the first, and best, literary portraits of a collaborationist parent was Marie Chaix's novel *Les Lauriers du lac de Constance* (The Laurels of Lake Constance), published in 1974, two years after the appearance of Robert Paxton's *Vichy France* shattered the myth of global French resistance to the Nazis. Marie Chaix's father, like Dominique Fernandez's, was a follower of Jacques Doriot; but Marie Chaix chose to write fiction rather than memoir, which allowed her to explore the points of view of various members of her family. Her book ends with the father's collapse and the daughter's forgiveness. In 2000 Dominique Jamet narrated *Un petit Parisien* from the point of view of his boyhood self, 5 years old in 1941, the son of a socialist father gone bad. Such books are always a high-wire act, maintaining their balance by not tilting toward either *règlement de comptes* (forms of vengeance) or mere apology. Among the finest literary examples of writers understanding their parents' failings with empathy, but not charity, is Francine du Plessix Gray's *Them* (2005), which never neglects the worst parental sins, all the while establishing mother and stepfather as the larger-than-life characters they certainly were. Both homage and critique, *Them* is a measured and courageous book, and although neither parent was politically compromised, du Plessix Gray's biological father, an aristocrat who died fighting for the Resistance, shared the anti-Semitic leanings of his class and generation.

In approaching the story of the fascist Ramon Fernandez, it's useful to remember that even the writers best known for their moral courage in occupied France faced murky circumstances and difficult choices. Jean Guéhenno, an essayist and the conscience of the pre-war left, published nothing above ground during the occupation, as a matter of principle. He was one of the few. But he remained a *lycée* professor, a civil servant paid by Vichy France, and didn't depend on income from writing. Jean-Paul Sartre produced *No Exit* and *The Flies* onstage with permission from the German authorities and with German officers in the audience. He was offered a job in a *lycée*, and it turned out that the person he replaced was a Jew who'd been stripped of his post by Vichy's anti-Jewish legislation. Marguerite Duras worked as the secretary for a Vichy commission that allocated paper supplies to publishers; she also participated in a Resistance network with François Mitterrand. Albert Camus allowed his *Myth of Sisyphus* to appear without the chapter on Kafka, who was on the "Otto list" of Jewish authors banned by the Nazis. Camus published the Kafka essay in *l'Arbalète*, in the unoccupied zone. Irène Némirovsky, struggling to keep her family alive in the dangerous occupied zone, published in *Gringoire*, a violently anti-Semitic journal produced in the unoccupied zone. Colette published in *Gringoire* and in *Comoedia*—two publications identified with the collaboration—at the same time that she was hiding her Jewish husband.

Even describing these actions as neutrally as possible, there's plenty of room for inter-

Alice Kaplan, the John M. Musser Professor of French at Yale University, is the author of several books about French writers during the Nazi occupation, including The Collaborator: The Trial and Execution of Robert Brasillach.

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pretation. Was publishing in *Comoedia*—a magazine of the arts—on a par with publishing in *Gringoire*? Was doling out paper supplies an act of collaboration or resistance? What about approving paper allotments for a book written by an opponent of Nazism? Was it an act of collaboration to refuse paper and effectively prevent an anti-Nazi author, or book, from appearing? What was Sartre's attitude about the person he replaced at the *lycée*? How anguished was the young Camus about removing Kafka from his first published book of essays? It takes fine discrimination, in studying these cases, to figure out where to draw the lines and how to parse intentions, actions and consequences.

Ramon Fernandez's political sins, far more straightforward at first glance, have nonetheless produced in his son a strange return to the kind of impassioned search for judgment that characterized the immediate postwar era, when special French courts tried and convicted collaborators according to Article 75, a provision of the 1939 penal code that specified the death penalty for "any Frenchman who, in wartime, undertook intelligence with a foreign power or its agents, with a view towards favoring the enterprises of this power against France." *With a view*: choices were assumed to be matters of intention, consciously taken. And with this question of intention comes Dominique Fernandez's interpretive dilemma.

Ramon Fernandez died of a pulmonary embolism in August 1944, twenty days before the liberation of Paris and three months before De Gaulle's purge courts tried its first wave of journalists and propagandists. Death spared Ramon his day in court. For his son, Dominique, a literary critic, editor, novelist and member of the Académie française, the file has remained open. When he was elected to the Académie in December 2007, Dominique made the unprecedented rhetorical gesture, at the outset of his inaugural speech, of inviting his father to sit under the august dome of the Institut de France with him and the other immortals: "I ask you to welcome with me the shadow of someone who has more reason to be here than I, and to whom I owe my existence: Ramon Fernandez, my father."

This ceremonial welcome was not the end of Dominique's struggle, for it preceded the publication of *Ramon* by two years. Exacerbating his fascination with the paternal figure was the fact that Dominique was raised by a mother who disapproved of any filial sign of affection for a father—her former abusive husband—who seemed only dimly aware of his son's presence. In other words, the shade of the father summoned by Dominique at the Académie française has always been a shadow for him, even when alive, and has drawn his power from the shadows. Only now, in book form, Dominique Fernandez has taken it as his filial responsibility to do what a French examining magistrate (*juge d'instruction*) would do—examine the case (*instruire le cas*) and, in the absence of a sitting court, close it, in much the way that you might close a tomb after a viewing, at the moment of burial. The gamble is real, and important: in making his father come alive as a subject of history, he hopes finally to put him to rest.

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Dominique Fernandez

Ramon Fernandez was born in 1894; his father was a Mexican diplomat, his mother a society journalist. As a young man about town, Ramon was a fop and ladies' man with an unpublished gay novel in his drawers; his literary circle included Marcel Proust, who held him in great esteem, and the founding members of the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, André Gide and Jean Schlumberger, who encouraged his critical vocation. He was friends with François Mauriac and Roger Martin du Gard, and acquainted with everyone who mattered in French literature.

In the United States, anyone who has read Wallace Stevens's "The Idea of Order at Key West," published in 1934, has caught a glimpse of Ramon:

> Ramon Fernandez, tell me, if you know,
> Why, when the singing ended and we turned
> Toward the town, tell why the glassy lights,
> The lights in the fishing boats at anchor there,
> As night descended, tilting in the air,
> Mastered the night and portioned out the sea,
> Fixing emblazoned zones and fiery poles,
> Arranging, deepening, enchanting night.
> Oh! Blessed rage for order, pale Ramon,
> The maker's rage to order words of the sea,
> Words of the fragrant portals, dimly-starred,
> And of ourselves and of our origins,
> In ghostlier demarcations, keener sounds.

For Stevens, Fernandez was the Frenchman with a Spanish name, but also the critic who wrote about his Marxist sympathies in the *Nouvelle Revue Française*. His name, with its perfect scansion, was also a marker of politics writ large, and of the battles Stevens was waging around the notion of ambiguity and the relationship of poetry to history and politics. Stevens couldn't have known how prophetic a phrase he had wrought for Fernandez in "the maker's rage to order."

In politics, like many intellectuals of his generation, Fernandez was drawn first to socialism, then to communism. And then, in 1937, he cast his lot with the rowdy charismatic figure of Jacques Doriot and his Parti populaire français (PPF), which was, as Robert Paxton explains in *The Anatomy of Fascism*, a "narrowly localized" party of several thousand members, whose platform revolved around the cult of the leader and bitter anticommunism. (Doriot had been expelled from the Communist Party for lack of discipline.) The PPF suffered from the dilemma of most nationalist fascist movements in France: how can you be nationalist if you're aping Hitlerian ideology and style? After the fall of France, the PPF veered into unconditional support for Germany as well as unabashed anti-Semitism (it received money, along the way, from both the Italian fascists and the Nazis). Ramon Fernandez

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supported the PPF with articles and speeches praising Doriot in nauseatingly sentimental terms, which his son can only quote in disbelief—asking, again and again, if his father could really have been serious.

The question Dominique must contend with is this: how did his father veer from Proust to Doriot? He posits a kind of political schizophrenia. The same person capable of helping a young man escape his work service in Germany, and of enabling a Jewish acquaintance to find relative safety in the unoccupied zone, cheered as Doriot applauded the efforts of Hitler's army on the Russian front. But perhaps there is more ideological coherence than Dominique is willing to acknowledge. To stay with the Proustian theme that runs through the book, he casts his father as a kind of virile and homosocial Baron de Charlus figure, with Doriot as his father's Jupien—his working-class lover. For Dominique, his father's fascism and collaboration boils down to a series of reinforcing circumstances: repressed homosexuality, alcoholism, shame over not having fought in World War I and even the fact that his father's first wife (Dominique's mother), whom the son is too quick to dismiss as an asexual bluestocking and killjoy, wouldn't let him dance the tango. Ramon wants a strong leader and finds one in the buffoonish Doriot. From time to time his son asks why, if he had been looking for a leader, couldn't he have turned to Charles de Gaulle? But the general's white-gloved authoritarian patriotism and Doriot's sweaty, incendiary populism are not at all the same thing and would not have carried the same charge.

In an attempt to close the books on his father, Dominique parses his words and actions from every angle. Active collaboration meant writing odes to Doriot's party and visiting Germany with other pro-Nazi intellectuals. Passive collaboration is his membership on the board of the committee that decided paper allotment for works of literature. This commitment is difficult to judge: the committee granted paper for the publication of books by Resistance figures Saint-Exupéry and Mauriac; its support ensured the publication of the first novels of Simone de Beauvoir (*L'Invitée*) and Marguerite Duras (*Les Impudents*), as well as Lucien Rebatet's abject *Les Décombres*, a vicious attack on the Third Republic, which came out in a huge print run.

Finally, even a comparison with a masterpiece like du Plessix Gray's *Them* proves inadequate because Fernandez must contend not only with his parents' personal failings but also the horrors of history, which prevent him from ever finding his equilibrium. One thing that makes *Ramon* so captivating is Dominique's constant, exhausting grasping at judgment. Dominique defends his father, then attacks him, in the same paragraph. In his father's defense, he quotes Roger Stéphane, best known for liberating the Paris Hôtel de Ville in August 1944. In 1941, on the verge of joining the Resistance, Stéphane, who was Jewish, wrote in his diary:

> Nothing is more difficult than taking a position. And this difficulty is increased by the absence of facts. Moreover, it is usually possible to nuance an opinion. Now it's impossible. You're either for the British and for De Gaulle, or for the Germans and for Hitler.

What Stéphane said next is shocking to read today:

> I am not sure that the cause of the British is just. I am not sure that the British interests aren't more reactionary than the Nazi interests.... I am not sure that one must, *a priori*, forbid Germany to attempt to organize Europe, a grandiose enterprise at which both France and England failed after 1918. One must ask these questions, which in themselves contain no elements for a response.

If a hero of the Liberation could entertain these doubts, Dominique asks, wasn't it possible, in those early years, for even the best-intentioned person to get it wrong?

When Dominique returns to the bar for the prosecution, he cites passage after passage in which Ramon expresses his admiration for Goebbels, Hitler and Doriot, who became brutally anti-Semitic in 1941. He quotes from Ramon's speeches in the company of Robert Brasillach, the editor of the fascist newspaper *Je suis partout*, who, along with Ramon, was the guest of Goebbels on a 1941 junket to Nazi Germany. In April 1942, several months before the French police rounded up 13,000 Jews at Vél d'Hiv sports stadium in Paris, Ramon stood on a PPF podium next to Georges Montandon, the official anthropological theorist of French anti-Semitism, under a banner that read, RACISM AND THE JEWS. His son can find no trace in his father's papers of the speech he gave that day.

Finally, Dominique locates, at the end of his father's life, visible signs of regret—more evidence for the defense. By 1943, when the Allies had invaded North Africa and the defeat of Hitler seemed imminent, Ramon took

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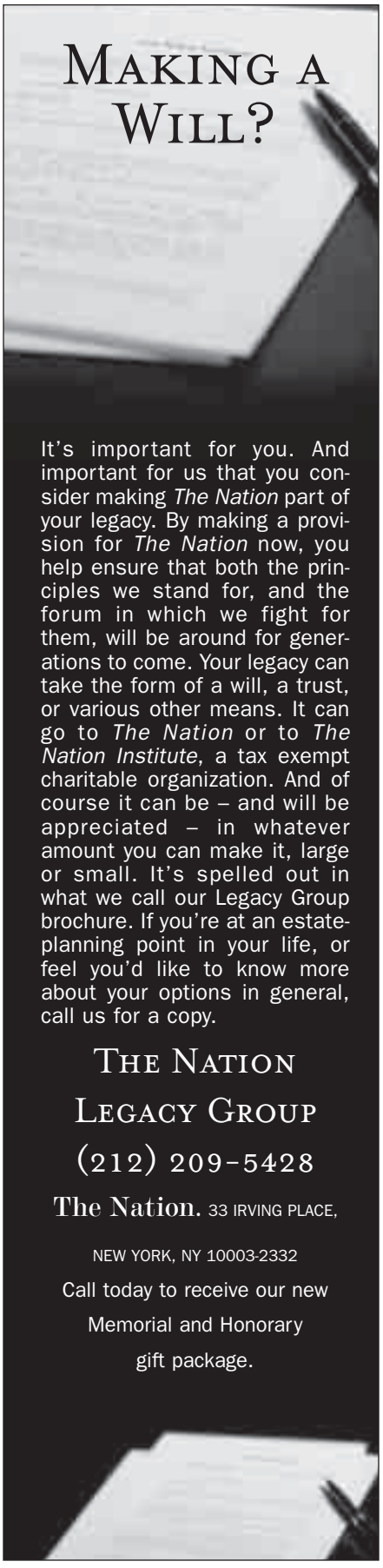
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off the ridiculous beret and uniform he had worn as a cheerleader for the PPF and returned to literary criticism. (It was around this time that Brasillach left *Je suis partout*.) Dominique counts two actions taken by his father at the end of his life as acts of resistance: first, several tributes to the Jewish philosopher Henri Bergson, one of the Nazis' foremost intellectual targets; and second, his last and one of his best books, a study of a novelist who was half Jewish, homosexual and decadent by every Nazi criterion—Marcel Proust. Ramon was also, according to family members, scandalized by the obligatory yellow Jewish stars, and insisted on taking the metro car reserved for Jews. But the anecdote about the yellow star is just that—anecdotal—and it's difficult to measure a family story against a literary reading, and a literary reading against an archive. For the historian, they're not equal. For the son, they coexist, footnotes of the heart.

It's often hard to know not only what counts as evidence but what to make of it. A recent article by Jean-Thomas Nordmann in the conservative French journal *Commentaire*, grappling with Ramon's extraordinary literary talent, points out that the kind of political/intellectual schizophrenia Dominique describes in his father is not so unusual. He insists that we can and should read Ramon's book on Proust without minding his public support for the racial theorist Montandon, which was strictly contemporaneous. If anything, Nordmann argues, Dominique's dogged juxtaposition of Ramon's literary and political personas makes him underestimate the value of his father's literary contributions. Nordmann is adding his voice to a conversation that goes back to the postwar purge, when the critic and publisher Jean Paulhan, disgusted by the purge courts, said that writers should have the right to make mistakes. Plenty of critics make the same argument about Céline, claiming that his delirious anti-Semitic pamphlets were errors—errors of judgment, errors of ethics—that need to be bracketed off from a true appreciation of his fiction.

But if errors didn't matter, Dominique Fernandez would not have had a book to write. Nor would he have been pressed to write one. History would not weigh on the present, or even give the impetus for new works of literature. For where he is utterly stumped as the examining magistrate of his father's case—by lack of evidence and especially by lack of motive—Dominique draws on his skills as a novelist to reimagine his father's world. And for the novelist, there is not an argument as much as there are scenes.

One recurring scene in particular offers a vision of literary life under the Nazi occupation that strikes deep at stock ideas of collaboration and resistance. The scene is of an apartment building on the rue Saint-Benoît in Paris. Marguerite Duras, the future star of the new novel, active in the Resistance, lives in an apartment she got thanks to Betty and Ramon Fernandez. Ramon, her friend and colleague on the paper commission, who lives directly above her, is on a path to alcoholic self-destruction, condemning himself to death before the state can. Sartre once said that a busy American in Paris could meet every French writer who counted within a single day. There is a dense psychogeography of literary life in this most literary of cities, and a symbol on every corner. Down the street from the rue Saint-Benoît is the Café de Flore, preferred by the Resistance. Across from the Flore is the Brasserie Lipp, Fernandez's headquarters and the favored spot for young fascists and collaborators. Sometimes friendship trumped politics, the population of the cafes mixed and agreements and alliances were made. Fernandez knew exactly when Duras joined the Resistance with her lover Dionys Mascolo—the two had met on the Vichy paper-allocation board, when Mascolo came to lobby for his publisher, Gallimard. Duras understood that Fernandez and his wife would never denounce her friends for Resistance activity. And it is a single throwaway line from Duras's novel *The Lover*—a remark she makes out of the blue—that will serve as the cornerstone of Dominique Fernandez's entire study. Her fault as a communist, and Fernandez's fault as a fascist, Duras claimed, boiled down to one mistake: believing in the political solution to the personal problem.

So we are left, after reading Dominique Fernandez's *Ramon*, neither condemning the novelist's father completely nor exculpating him but rather believing in the personal explanation for the political problem—which is a kind of exculpation, and a simplification, since the personal and the political are sure to combine in unexpected and uneven ways. So much time has passed since the events of 1940–45, it seems, that the old fervor and sense of responsibility has given way to an almost dreamlike—or even detached—sense of individual fragility, more appropriate for literature than for court. As for the novelist, Dominique, we're left with sympathy for his long struggle and with the hope that the examining magistrate, who has worked so hard and examined every file, can now be dismissed. ■

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SHELF LIFE

by JOHN PALATTELLA

FOR THE PAST THIRTY YEARS, A prejudice has been haunting the United States and parts of Europe. In a public lecture last October, the historian Tony Judt observed that when "asking ourselves whether we support a proposal or initiative, we have not asked, is it good or bad? Instead we inquire: Is it efficient? Is it productive?" This prejudice, Judt explained, is rooted in the "propensity to avoid moral considerations, to restrict ourselves to issues of profit and loss—economic questions in the narrowest sense."

Judt labeled this prejudice "economism" and proceeded to sketch its origins. With *Freefall: America, Free Markets, and the Sinking of the World Economy* (Norton; $27.95), Joseph Stiglitz has written an indispensable history of the emergence of market fundamentalism (or "economism") in the United States and its pernicious social consequences. *Freefall* is primarily an autopsy of the financial crisis. Stiglitz details in layman's terms how financial deregulation encouraged the banking sector to favor maximizing private revenues over managing social risk: economic growth was based on exorbitant debt that fed a consumption binge. But Stiglitz also dissects the relationship between the two major economic shifts of the past three decades—globalization and financialization, or the transformation of the financial sector into the primary engine of economic growth. Decades of prosperity and economic interconnectivity bred by bad ideas about the inherent virtues of free markets resulted in a stunning economic collapse—and the bankruptcy of market fundamentalism.

Ours is an era of severe economic and social insecurity. Stiglitz's response to the crisis is Keynesian: to save capitalism from itself. In the short term this would involve a bigger and better federal stimulus package, one committed less to tax cuts and more to plugging holes in state and local government budgets, and to making high-return investments in technology. In the long term it would demand nothing less than a reinvigoration of economic thought to eradicate the endemic rot of economism and to equip ourselves to discuss economic goods in the broadest sense. *Freefall* is an excellent place to start.

"AND THERE IN THE DISTANCE, nothing./A line of houses one can hardly make out/through the white of snow and sun." These lines from "The Fog," by the Cuban poet Eugenio Florit, could double as a sketch of the view from the north, and from within Cuba itself, of recent Cuban literature. The US embargo has corrupted our view of the island, and Castro's censors have stifled the publication of writing that departs from state-sanctioned *optimismo*. I found "The Fog" in *The Whole Island: Six Decades of Cuban Poetry*, edited by Mark Weiss (California; paper $29.95). Not since the 1982 publication of Paul Auster's *Random House Book of Twentieth Century French Poetry* has a bilingual anthology so effectively broadened the sense of poetic terrain outside the United States and also created a superb collection of foreign poems in English. There is nothing else like it. Weiss presents generous selections of work by fifty-five poets from Cuba and its diaspora; though ostensibly an anthology, *The Whole Island* is a gathering of individual voices (among them those of the twenty-two translators who contributed to the project). In "On Three Photos of Mella," Francisco de Oraá offers a riposte to Julio Mella, a founder of Cuba's Communist Party and a disapproving superego: "I only know that, deep down, I would have wanted to be let loose in the garden,/and that the garden would grow and become the whole world." Seeing through the fog (what Damaris Calderón calls this "sad business/this playing at being perfect"), Weiss has located the whole island's many imaginary gardens.

WHEN AMAZON WAS DEVELOPING ITS electronic reader, it hired a design firm to brand the gadget. The designers recommended the word "kindle" as a name for two reasons: its etymology is rooted in the Old Norse word for "candle" (*kyndill*), and it has a literary lineage dating back to the Enlightenment. "The instruction we find in books is like fire," wrote Voltaire. "We fetch it from our neighbors, kindle it at home, communicate it to others and it becomes the property of all." But the Kindle has sparked millennial anxieties. Among those who fear for the fate of reading and print in a digital age, the Kindle may evoke not the Enlightenment but *Fahrenheit 451*. This is no surprise: books have long been central to stories of apocalypse. Revelations are disclosures of truth. Revelation is also the name of an old book in which the image of a closing scroll symbolizes the end of the world.

Robert Darnton's expertise is in the history of the book in Enlightenment Europe, and his knowledge of how the age's writers and publishers fell short of establishing a Republic of Letters—an egalitarian society committed to the free flow of ideas—makes his essay collection *The Case for Books: Past, Present, and Future* (PublicAffairs; $23.95) a worthy guide to the tremors created by the Kindle and electronic reading. Darnton has found in physical books essential clues about the history of publishing, so it's no surprise to hear him admit that experiencing a digitized version of a book is not "comparable to the excitement of contact with the original." Yet he is excited about how digital technology enables libraries and scholars to "publish" their holdings and writings in the truest sense—to make them public and to foster intellectual exchange. This enthusiasm dims when Darnton discusses Google's book digitization project, Google Book Search. He argues persuasively (and has continued to do so in the pages of *The New York Review of Books*) that Google has created a "monopoly of a new kind, not of railroads or steel but of access to information," a fair amount of which has been provided to Google by public libraries. Fitting names for Google Book Search might be the Dwindle or the Swindle. ■

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Under Siege

by CHARLES GLASS

SHARON ABBADY

Emma Williams at an IDF checkpoint in the West Bank, 2002

It's Easier to Reach Heaven Than the End of the Street
A Jerusalem Memoir.
By Emma Williams.
Foreword by Brian Urquhart.
Olive Branch Press. 412 pp. Paper $16.

In October 2000 most of the children invited by Dr. Emma Williams to her son Archie's seventh birthday party failed to turn up. Distance was not the issue, given that her house was only twenty minutes from the French *lycée* where her two boys were studying. The problem was location. In Jerusalem, living anywhere is a political statement with safety implications. Although Williams had found her rented house by chance when acquaintances moved abroad, her modern two-story villa lay just to the east of the "seam" between Arab and Jewish Jerusalem. The eastern half of Jerusalem was occupied territory, inhabited by Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jewish settlers. The west side was Israel, where most of her friends and her husband's colleagues lived. When only two parents of the many children in Archie's class allowed their kids to attend his birthday, a journalist whose children stayed away explained to Williams, "You just happen to live on the wrong side of the reality."

Emma Williams, an English physician married to a United Nations diplomat, lived on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian "reality" for three years beginning in the spring of 2000. In *It's Easier to Reach Heaven Than the End of the Street*, a poignant memoir of that especially turbulent time, she has recorded both the decisive events of the second intifada against Israeli occupation and her struggle to raise three children, while giving birth to a fourth, amid the violence and restrictions of a conflict that has steadfastly resisted resolution for generations. Williams's husband, Andrew Gilmour, worked for the United Nations Secretariat in New York City. Although her academic credentials (BA from Oxford, MD from the University of London) outstripped her husband's, Williams had already followed his career from their native Britain to Pakistan, Afghanistan and New York before the UN assigned him to Jerusalem. His job was to assist Kofi Annan's personal representative to the PLO and the Palestinian Authority, Terje Roed-Larsen. The 1993 Oslo Accords had established the PA as representative and governor of Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories. (Roed-Larsen had a vested interest in the accords, having been involved in negotiating them in 1993.)

Charles Glass is the author, most recently, of Americans in Paris: Life and Death Under Nazi Occupation *(Penguin Press).*

Gilmour already had what the British call "form" in the Middle East. His father, Lord Gilmour, a former owner of the weekly *Spectator*, had served as a minister in Margaret Thatcher's first cabinet and defended the Palestinians' right to self-determination in Parliament.

Williams's life afforded her a unique perspective. While living in the Arab quarter of Jebel Mukaber, she made regular forays to friends in West Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. She worked as a physician in the West Bank, raised three (and then four) children on both sides of the divide, moved in Israeli and Palestinian circles and empathized as much with Israeli fear of suicide bombings as with Palestinian suffering under occupation. This book is her testament to the friends left behind when she flew out of Ben Gurion Airport on the night the United States began to "shock and awe" the people of Iraq as prelude to the invasion of March 2003. It is a period piece, documenting the transition from the illusion that the Oslo Accords would bring a just resolution to the desperation of suicide bombings to Israel's erection of a twenty-five-foot concrete wall that divides Israel from the Arab-majority portions of East Jerusalem and the West Bank. The wall created what Israeli Gen. Amos Gilad called "microcosms," the Palestinian towns and cities separated from one another by Israeli checkpoints, fortresses and settlements. This strategy, he said, was for "this year and for all years."

Williams's first months in Israel coincided with the death throes of the Oslo process amid Israeli settlement building, Bill Clinton's Camp David fiasco and Ariel Sharon's notorious promenade through Jerusalem's Muslim Noble Sanctuary, the Jewish Temple Mount. The latter two events prompted the first, hesitant stirring of the Palestinians' second uprising—which would, in fact, make their lives worse, as the Israelis responded with armed assaults, forays into and renewed occupation of areas designated for nominal Palestinian self-rule and, later, the wall and more assaults on the West Bank and Gaza. Oslo, as Edward Said pointed out when its details were published, was a fraud that did little more than relocate the Tunis-based PLO leadership to Ramallah while allowing Israel to seize more Palestinian land for settlements. During the seven years of Oslo's writ, Israel confiscated 100 square miles of Palestinian territory, from which the original owners were excluded. Every Palestinian inhabitant of the occupied territories was aware of this, even if the UN, the United States, the European Union and Yasir Arafat himself pretended all was well. To exacerbate the Palestinians' anguish, they endured the corruption and incompetence of the Palestinian Authority—ostensibly "their" government.

An American at the UN, Rick Hooper, had told Williams before she left New York, "Seven years after Oslo and all the billions the international community has ploughed into the PA, what have the Palestinians got? Egyptian standards of bureaucracy, Syrian standards of human rights, Lebanese standards of accountability—and all to serve the interests of the Israelis." The PA's role, determined by Israel and the United States, was to control "terrorism"—that is to say, to arrest, hold without trial and occasionally torture any Palestinian who fought against the theft of Palestinian land and other oppressive acts of occupation. Ramallah, the putative capital of Palestine while negotiations foundered

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over the move to Jerusalem, played Vichy to the occupying power. By any measure, the "situation" was untenable when Andrew Gilmour arrived to take up his post with Roed-Larsen to defend Oslo.

While her husband ferried between Israel and the territories, Williams began balancing motherhood and work, juggling involvement in the "situation" with necessary escapes and steadfastly cultivating friendships among Jews and Arabs. It was no mean feat for her to endure long delays at the Israeli checkpoint outside Bethlehem, where she had chosen to give birth to her son Sholto at Christmas in 2001. Many Palestinian mothers had lost their babies or died while being denied permission to cross to maternity wards that could have saved them. Even Palestinian friends were astounded that she had not chosen the safer option of a hospital in Israel.

The "situation" that dominated her life and almost all conversation was not, she discovered, simply a straightforward conflict between two peoples over living space in one land. "In reality," she wrote, "it's a maelstrom, a tragedy of our times, a shameful failure of the modern world. And it looks so different from over there, on the ground, that the view from New York verges dangerously on fantasy." Networks of friendship, artistic cooperation, trade, political solidarity and occasional intermarriage penetrated the sectarian divide. There may have been a war between the two peoples, but there was also mutual dependence. (Opponents of the so-called security barrier refer to it as the "apartheid" wall, believing its purpose is to end communication between the two peoples as well as to annex the richest land to Israel.)

I have rarely seen a mass demonstration for Palestinian rights in Israel or the occupied territories without the active participation of conscientious Israeli Jews. Whenever Israeli army bulldozers (usually Caterpillar D9s) demolished an Arab house in the West Bank, Israeli protesters stood beside the Palestinians whose house was lost. At least 24,000 Palestinian homes have suffered destruction since 1967. Their owners are more grateful to Israeli activists like Jeff Halper of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (Williams wrote that Israeli troops often beat him up for his efforts) than to Arab states like Jordan and Egypt. Too many Israelis—among them Uri Avnery, Rabbis for Human Rights, B'Tselem and Combatants for Peace—have fought on behalf of Palestinians for them not to remain connected to Israeli society. Even more unexpected, some Palestinian prisoners who learned to speak Hebrew in Israeli prisons became friends with their guards,

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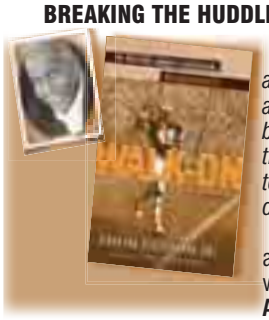

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as *Ha'aretz* correspondent Amira Hass has written. And few foreign correspondents have reported on the occupation's cruelty with more compassion than Israeli journalists like Gideon Levy and Danny Rubinstein.

Despite this cross-cultural solidarity, the simple question persists: who will live in the West Bank, settlers or natives? Settlers, with government subsidies for cheap housing as well as army protection and Jewish-only highways, are daily displacing Palestinians. The occupation has made life for them so unsustainable that many—particularly Christian Palestinians, to whom Western visas are more easily granted—have joined what Williams calls "the silent transfer" out of their country.

The Gilmours' Palestinian neighbors, four generations of an extended family, welcomed the Britons despite their country's unenviable record in the region. One told Williams shortly after she moved in, "You [the British] gave Palestine away—not that it was yours to give, but we forgive you." He was facetious, but when a female neighbor tells Williams that two women keen to help her with housekeeping won't be allowed by their men to work in another man's house for cash, she wasn't joking. The women helped Williams anyway, in exchange for favors. An Orthodox Jewish settler family nearby shunned the itinerant goyim entirely.

In the first weeks of the violence, a UN official informed Williams that her furniture and other belongings had finally arrived from New York. He added, "But do you really want to unpack it—why not send it straight back to where it came from?" She answered, "Of course I want to unpack it. This can't go on." It did go on, and it got worse. In the first ten days of the uprising, ninety-five people were killed—ninety of them Palestinians. Nonetheless, she was determined to stay—even when the UN evacuated family dependents at the end of 2000. She would still not budge when a suicide bomber's head landed in her sons' schoolyard. If you've read J.G. Farrell's *The Siege of Krishnapur*, you'll know the type of sturdy British womanhood that Emma Williams embodied. She had already learned too much in Afghanistan to accept the expat aid workers' judgments about "life for 'these people' being cheap." While working in an Afghan hospital a few years previously, she'd heard other observers insist that Afghans had no regard for women in their families. She might have believed this nonsense had she not seen the father of an 8-year-old girl who had been killed in a car accident holding his dead child while he "rocked back and forth, tears slipping down his darkened face, muffled animal cries of pain escaping from deep inside his body. He didn't fit the image. And now here there was more hard-hearted talk about Palestinian parents." The myth circulating in Israel and certain American media outlets was that Palestinian parents deliberately sent their children to die in order to make propaganda points. The calumny directed at the father of 12-year-old Muhammad al-Dura, who was shot dead by Israeli soldiers as his father attempted to cover the boy's body with his own in Gaza in September 2000, was an especially pernicious example.

Not all aid workers, however, were blind to the predicament in which Israelis and Palestinians found themselves. One told Williams, "One day, we will look back on this charade with shame and ask 'how in hell was this allowed to happen?' We dress it up in shades of 'security'—what are we talking about? That's crap and we all know it. This is not about security. None of this is making anyone secure—the opposite is true, but we're not going to say so, are we? This is about annexation of territory and slow ethnic cleansing. It's making Israel less secure and a pariah nation on top of that. And we're playing along with it, pouring billions of Euros and dollars into keeping the occupied going, keeping their heads above water while they're boxed in like animals.... Oh, but don't let anyone hear you say it. My God, we're in trouble if we say it like it is. No no, we *must* toe the line, but why?"

I should mention that I stayed with Williams and her husband for a few weeks in 2002, which allowed me to watch them live out the drama of which she has written so thoughtfully. Living in a political tinderbox, in which they lost friends to violence on both sides, put strains on their marriage. It could hardly do otherwise, but their family life emerged stronger. She would come home in the evening, after a day in a Ramallah clinic while Israeli tanks shelled Arafat's headquarters, to bathe her children (often by candlelight, because of the frequent power cuts in Arab neighborhoods) and put them to bed. Her coping mechanism seemed to be writing up a diary on her computer, and the diary became the basis of this book. It is a woman's—a doctor's and a mother's—tale, and she brings to it a sensitivity to suffering and humiliation that eludes those to whom every act of violence by either side demands an act of revenge. At that time, I wrote in my book *The Tribes Triumphant*, "Emma Gilmour, I was convinced, could do anything." Having read this book, I realize I was right. ■

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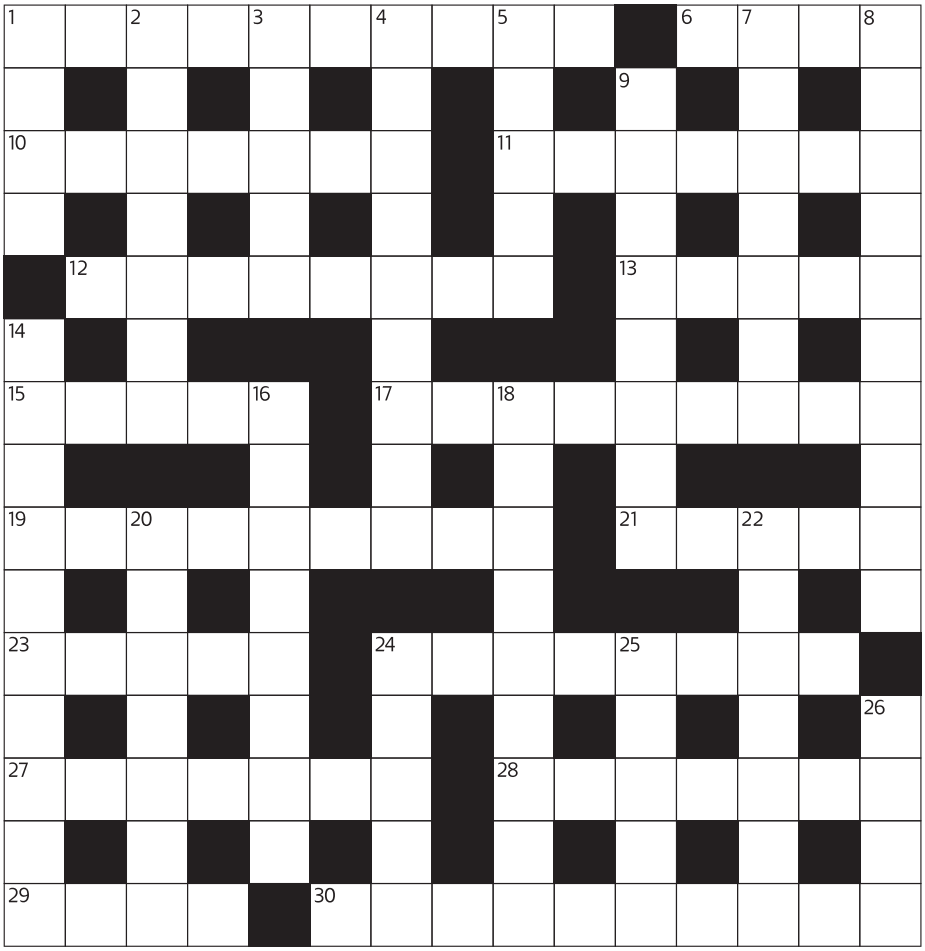

ACROSS

1 Was nothing changed where Reagan operated? (10)

6 With nothing like a lower Africa organization, exchange what sounds like bare feet coming back. (4)

10 Our own uncle keeps wrecked cars inside, which might be a put-down. (7)

11 Make repayment of a note? Really, as the Brit might say! (7)

12 Jack, for example, is a loud one with his auto—a classic 500. (4,4)

13 Is not exactly let out of carpet material, perhaps. (5)

15 Leans to one side—on the back of one's feet. (5)

17 It shouldn't be very popular, but it made the Hit Parade! (9)

19 Not a regular performance, but it's genuine as one listens for its heart. (9)

21 What the widow might get when the medico is about to be in the red. (5)

23 The test obviously involves trail-breaking. (5)

24 Taken in by some considered immortal? (8)

27 You might get a swell feeling if you are, but be told a different version. (7)

28 One who might not get credit for being an account examiner? (7)

29 In certain areas of London 15 might be slippery. (4)

30 A spell of music for those who like Wagner? Such a time! (4,6)

DOWN

1 and **22** A sort of 6 gets wasted, by the sound of it. (Women liked to be so at one time.) (4-7)

2 It isn't a lady that comes up certain about it, but they sometimes tell you to list it first. (7)

3 Empty in one quarter. (5)

4 Of higher frequency than X when mother goes up and down in certain colors. (5,4)

5 It's nothing to one on the far left, but you might get paddled this way. (5)

7 What starts with 13? Something to do while you're working with song! (7)

8 They might claim to be rulers, but represent (albeit poorly) only about 500. (10)

9 Didn't look open-eyed, certainly! (8)

14 Such people might be giving away a broken chair and some other furniture. (10)

16 Everything in small portions of drink might be served with salad. (8)

18 Trains to be entered at its call. (3,6)

20 Its application gave a meaning to anti-macassars. (4,3)

22 See 1 down

24 That's what you hear on TV! (5)

25 Some associate it with the law, but it might be something you have to follow. (5)

26 The fight for which I'd get away from the time of 30. (4)

This puzzle originally appeared in the February 25, 1984, issue.

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1478

I	N	E	V	E	R	S	A	W	A	■	E	C	R	U
T	■	Q	■	L	■	E	■	E	■	C	■	A	■	N
C	O	U	P	L	E	D	■	D	R	O	P	L	E	T
H	■	I	■	I	■	A	■	G	■	N	■	Y	■	H
■	A	N	I	S	E	T	T	E	■	C	A	P	R	I
S	■	O	■	■	■	I	■	■	■	E	■	S	■	N
T	A	X	E	S	■	V	A	P	O	R	L	O	C	K
E	■	■	■	C	■	E	■	U	■	N	■	■	■	I
M	E	R	G	A	N	S	E	R	■	S	A	T	I	N
W	■	E	■	N	■	■	■	P	■	■	■	I	■	G
I	N	C	A	S	■	D	E	L	I	C	A	T	E	■
N	■	I	■	I	■	E	■	E	■	A	■	A	■	O
D	I	P	L	O	M	A	■	C	O	R	O	N	E	R
E	■	E	■	N	■	T	■	O	■	O	■	I	■	E
R	E	S	T	■	S	H	O	W	P	L	A	C	E	S

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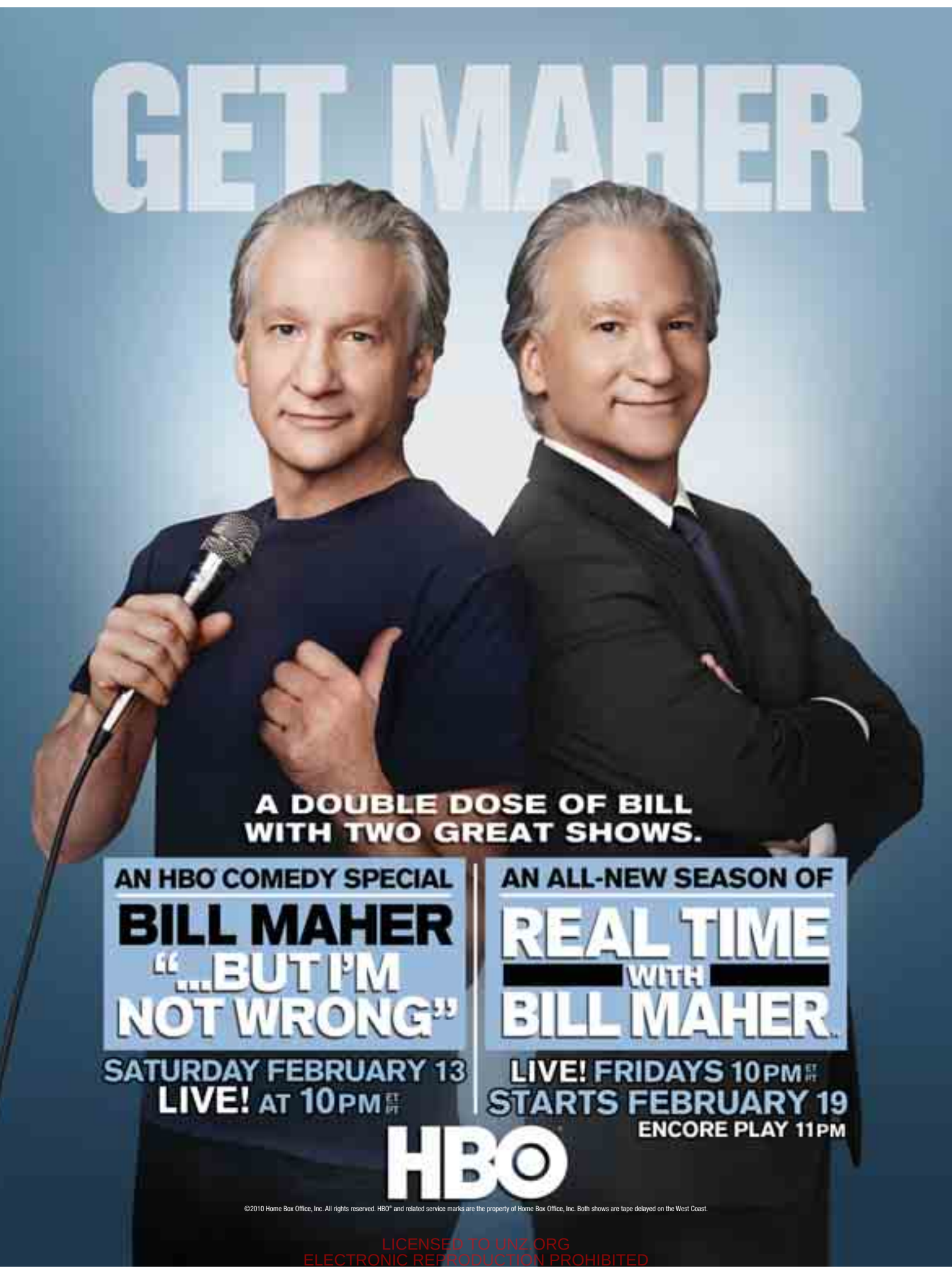

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